

GHANAIAAN AGENCY IN DEMOCRATIZATION: EXAMINING DEMOCRACY
PROMOTION IN U.S.-GHANA RELATIONS AFTER THE COLD WAR, 1992-2001

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By

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of U.S. aid on democratization in the post-Soviet world. It sheds light on how the U.S., emboldened by its new position as the world's main superpower, promoted democratization, particularly the U.S. form of democracy, as a normative value throughout the developing world. More specifically, I explore the ways that the promotion of democracy in Africa was construed and even, challenged, through local democratizing efforts, civil society action and popular participation. Utilizing a case study approach, this work analyzes the impact of domestic ideology on American foreign aid policy in Ghana after 1990 and how the Ghanaian people and leadership understood democratization, its promotion and their relationship with external agents promoting the adoption of democracy. More importantly, the project argues that foreign assistance programmes for democratization in Ghana were not the main drivers for democracy. Ghanaian demands and activities to promote democracy as an alternative to one-man rule played significant roles in the transition to the rule of law in Ghana.

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DEDICATION

To my Dad, Mr. Daniel Braimah, the giant on whose shoulders I continue to stand. I am grateful for the discipline, humility, thirst for knowledge, and ambition you nurtured in me all these years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PERMISSION TO USE.....	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1 THE BIRTH OF DEMOCRACY PROMOTION: AN ANALYSIS OF U.S. NATIONAL DISCOURSE.....	26
1.1. The Resuscitation of an Idea: The Reagan Emphasis on Democracy.....	28
1.2. The Firming of Democracy Promotion: From the Bush to Clinton Years.....	37
CHAPTER 2 U.S. AID AND DEMOCRATIZATION, 1990-2001.....	46
2.1. Aid for Democracy in U.S. Africa Policy: Some Post-Cold War Evidence...	47
2.2. The Ghanaian Response to the Politics of Assistance.....	61
CHAPTER 3 THE GHANAIAN TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY, 1988-1992....	66
3.1. Ghana: A Brief Background.....	67
3.2. The Growth of Ghanaian Constitutional Government.....	69
3.3. The Mass Nature of Ghana's Fourth Republican Transition.....	70
3.4. The Ghanaian Response to the End of the Cold War.....	80
CHAPTER 4 DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION: POST-ELECTION GHANAIAN POLITICS AND DEMOCRACY, 1993-2001.....	87
4.1. The Growth and Consolidation of Democratic Institutions.....	87
4.2. Democracy as Transactional: The Mass Expectation for Socio-Economic Change.....	96

CONCLUSION.....	109
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	114

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADFG- Alliance of Democratic Forces Ghana
AFRC- Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
CDR- Committee for the Defense of the Revolution
CIA- Central Intelligence Agency
DANIDA- Danish Development Agency
DPP- Democratic People's Party
EC- Electoral Commission
FEF-Fredrich Ebert Foundation
INEC- Interim Electoral Commission
IRI- International Republican Institute
NCD- National Commission for Democracy
NCSL- National Conference of State Legislators
NDC- National Democratic Party
NDI- National Democratic Institute
NDIIA- National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NDM- New Democratic Movement
NED- National Endowment for Democracy
NGA- New Generation Alliance
NGO- Non-governmental Organization
NIP-National Independent Party
NPP- New Patriotic Party
NRIIA- National Republican Institute of International Affairs
OATUU- Organization of African Trade Union Unity
PAMSCAD-Programme of Adjustment to Meet the Social Cost of Adjustment
PHP- People's Heritage Party
PNC- People's National Convention
PNDC- Provincial National Defense Council
SAP- Structural Adjustment Programme
TUC- Trade Union Congress
UN- United Nations
US- United States
USAID- United States Agency for International Development
USIA- United States Information Agency
USIS-United States Information Service
USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1.....54

Figure 2.2.....55

Figure 2.3.....57

LIST OF TABLES

Tables 2.1.....	60
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INTRODUCTION

The rise of the modern nation-state enlarged state-to-state relations, which in turn affected a host of social, political, cultural and economic factors in international relations. Hans Morgenthau, the mid-twentieth century American political scientist, explains how the emergence of modern diplomacy in European politics from the Enlightenment onwards made structural level political relations more engaging.¹ A marker of that change in diplomacy was the embedding of the idea of resident consulates in inter-state relations.² For this reason, host states worked hard to gain the trust of guest envoys as a means to better relations with the sending states. European governments hosting envoys or ambassadors from other European powers sometimes provided subsidies to the resident envoys to gain their support in advocating their positions to the envoy's home government.³

In the 20th century, the new diplomacy Morgenthau espoused deepened as technology and historical changes birthed new relations among states. During the Cold War, some wealthy states used material resources and technology to court the favour of

¹ Hans Morgenthau, "A Political Theory of Foreign Aid," *American Political Science Review* 56, no. 2 (June 1962): 301–9, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1952366>.

² Resident consulates are permanent, physical presences of foreign states in other countries usually represented by an ambassador or envoy.

³ Morgenthau provides one of the early theoretical basis for aid in U.S foreign policy in the post-World War II era when the U.S. entered preeminence as leader of the West. He emphasizes aid as a likely tool for realist politicking on the international stage by U.S policymakers. This tradition is traced to Austrian and French subsidy schemes for envoys during the 18th century. He relates how, for instance, Austrian Chancellor Klemens von Metternich received secret subsidies from the French government to advocate for French interests in Austrian courts. In the Twentieth Century, subsidies found an overt place in official diplomatic cycles in international affairs. See Morgenthau, "A Political Theory of Foreign Aid."

less endowed states. Most of these recipient states were developing countries.⁴ As a superpower, the United States made use of this instrument of action to try to expropriate policy concessions from its allies and draw hostile forces closer to its position and interests. Though Britain and the Nordic states, namely Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark, as well as other wealthy industrialized nations, were engaged in what one might call 'the business of benevolence' to other countries, the scale of U.S. foreign aid outweighed all other countries.⁵

The project sheds light on how the U.S., emboldened by its new position as the world's main superpower in the post-Cold War era, promoted democratization, particularly the U.S. form of democracy, as a normative value throughout the developing world including Ghana. Also, I explore the ways in which the Ghanaian people- civil society groups, community leaders, young people - construed and challenged the U.S. democracy advancement campaign. Utilizing a case study approach, this work offers understanding of the impact of domestic ideology on American foreign aid policy in Ghana after 1990 as well the receptivity of the Ghanaian people to the inimitable ways Americans crafted democracy promotion. This project argues that local forces led, shaped, and executed the Ghanaian democratization agenda in the 1990s with limited assistance from foreign donor agencies. To ascribe democratization to the ingenuity of

⁴ These were states with low economic growth, political cohesion or technological power. For a detailed review, see Moses Allor Awinsong, "The Power of the Periphery: Aid, Mutuality and Cold War U.S-Ghana Relations, 1957-1966," Eastern Illinois University, (Master's Thesis, No: 3323), 2017, chap. 1.

⁵ J. Bradford De Long and Barry Eichengreen, "The Marshall Plan: History's Most Successful Structural Adjustment Program," Working Paper (National Bureau of Economic Research, November 1991), <https://doi.org/10.3386/w3899>. Aid was considered benevolent because there was no expectation of pay back. Many Western donors did not measure the returns for their aid in merely physical terms. Rather, there was an expectation of subtle or overt support for Western causes in world politics during the Cold War.

democracy aid givers or Washington policy makers is to deny the agency of local democratizing forces in aid recipient states like Ghana.

The understanding of democracy used here includes, in the words of Gerardo Munck, “values of political freedom and political equality.”⁶ This understanding includes elections and institutional provisions and guarantees of individual liberty that enable citizens to partake in political decision-making as well as support the continuing enhancement of social and political environments for citizen participation in governance. Similarly, Giovanni Sartori provides three pillars on which democracy stands: a) constitutional structures and processes, b) electoral and voting arenas, and c) society at large.⁷ Based on these postulations, democracy is genuine when power holders use legitimate, elective processes to come to power. Citizens must be able to demand answers from elected leaders for certain decisions as well as partake in the decision-making process. The use of the term democracy in this work implies both the politics of the transition and some elements of post-transition politics in Ghana.

The rule of law is a concept that essentializes individual liberty and the constitutional procedures and processes necessary to assure those liberties.⁸ It is an important measure of the quality of democracy because it emphasizes the centrality of law over rule by persons in determining the legitimacy of the state in requiring obligations from individuals. For Richard Bellamy, the checks and balances inherent in a state’s constitutional arrangements provide the most extensive, broad and potent

⁶ Gerardo L. Munck, What is democracy? A reconceptualization of the quality of democracy, *Democratization*, 23:1, (2016), 1-26, DOI: 10.1080/13510347.2014.918104.

⁷ Giovanni Sartori, “The Tyranny of the Majority.” In *Democracy: A Reader*, Edited by Ricardo Blag, page 192. Second Edition, New York City, Columbia University Press (2001).

⁸ Richard Bellamy and Andrew Mason, *Political Concepts*, Ed., (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

inhibition to the exercise of arbitrary executive power.⁹ He thus concludes that the rule of law, understood in the institutional arrangements of organs of government in democracies, works to strengthen individual freedoms by keeping each branch in check. Thomas Paine also made the popular observation that “in absolute governments the king is law, so in free countries the law ought to be king; and there ought to be no other.”¹⁰

But, under what legitimate basis would citizens challenge unreasonable demands for abeyance to law by the state? To resolve this problem, Aristotle opined that arbitrary exercise of power is avoidable when “rightly constituted law should be the final sovereign; and personal rule...should be sovereign only on those matters on which law is unable, owing to the difficulty of framing general rules for all contingencies, to make an exact pronouncement.”¹¹ The rule of law is therefore grounded on two foundations. Firstly, there are the checks and balances and the separation of powers inherent in power arrangements among organs of government which prevent arbitrary exercise of state power by any one organ. Secondly, the rule of law entails devotion to the rules defining individuals’ relations with others and the state. In this sense, it implies the strict use of procedures to protect citizens’ liberties individually or collectively. Both considerations of the rule of law are employed in this project to explain the consolidation of democracy in Ghana in the post-Cold War period.

⁹Richard Bellamy, “The Rule of Law,” In *Political Concepts*, Ed. Richard Bellamy and Andrew Mason, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).

¹⁰ Thomas Paine, “Common Sense”, in Nelson F. Adkins, ed, *Common Sense and Other Political Writings* 3, 32 (Liberal Arts, 1953).

¹¹ Ernest Barker, *The Politics of Aristotle*, Book 3 (Translated), (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), Chapter 11: 19.

Study Background

A notable aid initiative after 1945 that launched Washington as a global economic power was the Marshall Plan. Probably the most ambitious international subsidy program in the past century, the Marshall Plan, formally the European Recovery Program (ERP), facilitated Western European rebuilding after the Second World War. It announced the U.S. as a major aid giver to the world and created opportunities for “infinite possibilities of influencing the policies, attitudes and actions of other countries by statesmanship in Washington.”¹² Michael Hogan, a historian of U.S. foreign relations, considers the Marshall Plan as America's “search for a new economic order at home and abroad” after 1945.¹³ The plan helped “restructure the world economy” in ways synonymous to the “corporativist” economy of the U.S. which prioritized private enterprise and a capitalist led growth more so than the state-led recovery pursued in socialist domains in the East.¹⁴ The Marshall Plan was therefore a combination of capitalist interests, humanitarianism, and Washington's political vision, creating for the U.S. much needed moral, political and economic capital in the ensuing Cold War.¹⁵ According to historians and scholars, the plan exemplified the capacity of aid to facilitate U.S. national interests globally and to support other states' transitions from poverty, destruction and underdevelopment to

¹² Joseph Marion Jones, *The Fifteen Weeks: February 21-June 5, 1947*, vol. 47 (Harcourt, 1955), 262-63.

¹³ Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 2.

¹⁴ Hogan, *The Marshall Plan*, 3.

¹⁵ The U.S. understood that control of the global economic structure would position it for a more expansive role in world affairs in a way that would displace the old powers. This foresight helped provide the foundation for the broad external policies of the U.S. after 1945. See Geir Lundestad, “Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952,” *Journal of Peace Research* 23, no. 3 (September 1, 1986): 263–77, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002234338602300305>.

wealth and progress.¹⁶ Eventually, the plan, though an Europe first policy, was replicated in Asia and Africa on smaller scales with the conviction that it would lift economically needy nations from poverty and expand their access to the benefits conferred on humanity by democracy, capitalist-led economics, and technology. The struggle to sell this Western antidote to political and economic underdevelopment defined much of the Cold War conflict.¹⁷

The Cold War birthed profound political changes to interstate relations in ways not previously seen until 1945. In the wake of the Peace of Paris, new Soviet and U.S. competition for ideological dominance, military power and economic preeminence defined international relations. In that period, foreign assistance programmes were hitched to development theories advocated by the two superpowers across the developing world. In many African countries, superpower interventions either accommodated autocratic leaders or sought to oust unfriendly administrations from office, irrespective of their regime type.¹⁸ To achieve these goals, foreign assistance was allocated or cutback for various African governments as a reward or punishment for their foreign and domestic policy choices during the Cold War.

¹⁶ Matthew Lockwood, “Will a Marshall Plan for Africa Make Poverty History?,” *Journal of International Development: The Journal of the Development Studies Association* 17, no. 6 (2005): 775–89; Pavel Nováček, “The Future of Development Assistance – Do We Need a New Marshall Plan?,” *Development, Environment and Foresight* 1, no. 2 (December 14, 2015): 92–105; Michele Fratianni and Paolo Savona, *Sustaining Global Growth and Development: G7 and IMF Governance* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

¹⁷ Leslie O. Omoruyi, *Contending Theories on Development Aid: Post-Cold War Evidence from Africa* (Routledge, 2017).

¹⁸ Olajide Aluko, “African Response to External Intervention in Africa since Angola,” *African Affairs* 80, no. 319 (1981): 159–79; Elizabeth Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa: From the Cold War to the War on Terror*, vol. 7 (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Awinsong, “The Power of the Periphery: Aid, Mutuality and Cold War U.S-Ghana Relations, 1957-1966.” All these scholars discuss the Cold War aid programmes of donors in Africa in detail and explore how African countries were affected by Cold War power politics as well as African reactions to these profound geopolitical challenges in those decades.

In it was in this geopolitical climate that Ghana's relations with the United States was founded. Foreign assistance politics, global diplomacy over Communism, and African independence and conflict issues defined Ghana-U.S. bilateral relations from the 1950s onwards. Using a myriad of available diplomatic resources, the Ghanaian people and leadership courted American financial investment and foreign assistance to undertake capital projects such as the Akosombo Dam. In fact, Ghana received the first Peace Corp volunteers from the Kennedy administration in 1961 as part of the effort to strengthen Ghana-U.S. relations as well as supporting the social and economic development agenda of the new Ghanaian state. The nature of this bilateral relationship was emblematic of U.S. Cold War politics with developing states in Africa and beyond.

In the post-Cold War period, a myriad of factors grounded Washington's aid policies towards African countries. American aid initiatives aimed at catering to humanitarian needs: to protect the lives of people in disaster situations abroad, to aid war-torn communities, and to help societies suffering from famine or disease. The historically diverse nature of aid intent convinces Carol Lancaster, a scholar of U.S. aid policy and a former assistant director of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), that there are complexities in U.S. aid policy because there are no easy answers to the question: "Why do countries give aid?"¹⁹ Without dismissing other legitimate views, Lancaster identifies domestic factors such as lobby groups as more essential than external influences in determining U.S. aid policy towards other countries. Policymakers', a part of that internal politics, stressed democracy advancement to which substantial foreign aid was committed to. Eric Neumayer, a political scientist at the London School of

¹⁹ Carol Lancaster, *Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), ix.

Economics, also researched, specifically, whether good governance influenced aid allocation of donors during the first decades of the post-Cold War period.²⁰ He concludes that “democracy, respect for human rights, low military expenditures and low regulatory burden” in recipient states are important determinants of donors' tendency to give aid.²¹ But Keith N. Griffins and John L. Enos, economists at Oxford University, disagree.²² While acknowledging the diversity of donors' aid purposes, they believe that, “foreign assistance has neither accelerated growth nor helped to foster democratic political regimes.”²³ They are not alone. Dambisa Moyo has gone so far as to describe non-emergency foreign assistance as “dead aid” for African recipients because assistance packages have crippled economies; they have increased inflation for most of the small economies receiving aid.²⁴

Historiography

The Promotion of Democracy and U.S. Foreign Policy

Democracy took roots in the United States from the pre-revolutionary era when early European settlers established communities with government structures to maintain law, order and decorum.²⁵ But spread of that democracy abroad took time. Democracy promotion as an American foreign policy did not emerge without internal political debates and struggle. Indeed, other foreign policy issues in the United States have been

²⁰ Eric Neumayer, *The Pattern of Aid Giving: The Impact of Good Governance on Development Assistance* (London: Routledge, 2005).

²¹ Neumayer, *The Pattern of Aid Giving*, 97.

²² K. B. Griffin and J. L. Enos, “Foreign Assistance: Objectives and Consequences,” *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 18, no. 3 (1970): 313–27.

²³ Griffin and Enos, *Foreign Assistance*, 326.

²⁴ Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa* (Macmillan, 2009).

²⁵ Alexis De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, vol. 10 (Regnery Publishing, 2003).

defined largely by local politics such as U.S. entry into World War I.²⁶ For instance, David Kennedy explores Congressional and White House concerns about crafting the right public opinion about World War I in view of “America’s diverse accumulation of ethnic groups.”²⁷ The earliest most important work on identity politics in U.S foreign policy came in a 1948 book, *The Man in the Street: The Impact of American Public Opinion on Foreign Policy*.²⁸ In this book, Thomas Bailey posits that identity activism in U.S. foreign policy making was pervasive to the extent that it sometimes outweighed executive and legislative authority on critical foreign policy matters.

Similarly, Louis Wirth argues that external policy is a process of contestation among various power centres within nations. In the United States, he explains, dominant groups molded U.S. foreign policy to safeguard their economic and racial spaces. Such racial influences on foreign policy sometimes took the form of bigotry against certain cultural groups. Examples include legislation like Executive Order 9066 (1942) by Franklin D. Roosevelt and the earlier Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), which sought to limit immigration and the movement of Japanese and Chinese groups into and within the U.S. Wirth therefore emphasizes how racial, ethnic, and religious or denominational

²⁶ David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society* (Oxford University Press, 2004); Clifford Wilcox, “World War I and the Attack on Professors of German at the University of Michigan,” *History of Education Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (1993): 59–84. Due to a significant population of German immigrant descendants in the Mid-West, for instance, there were deep social divisions about the war for many Midwestern politicians and citizens. Cox explores this theme with respect to how German professors at the University of Michigan fared at the hands of local anti-German activists. About five million German immigrants entered the United States in the 1890s, according to statistics reported by Aneta Pavlenko in “We Have Room for but One Language Here’: Language and National Identity in the US at the Turn of the 20th Century,” *Multilingua* 21, no. 2/3 (2002): 163–96.

²⁷ Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*, 46.

²⁸ Thomas Andrew Bailey, *The Man in the Street: The Impact of American Public Opinion on Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), chap. 1.

divisions and imaginations rivaled each other in determining the direction of U.S. foreign policy.²⁹

By the 1980s, the tenor of the scholarship shifted to understand how deep social layers and economic motives affected the crafting of U.S. foreign policy in the twentieth century. Robert Dallek, a U.S. foreign relations historian, argues for an understanding of “nonrational influences on foreign policy.”³⁰ He sees these non-rational factors as “undercurrents, of mood, tone, or milieu, of a climate of feeling that almost imperceptibly insinuates itself into concrete ideas and actions” which are largely “subjective influences that makers and backers of foreign policy barely glimpse themselves.”³¹ Dallek holds that these subjective factors are harder to show than the more objective categories.³²

Historian Michael Hunt also makes the case for ideology in U.S. foreign policy explaining that “the fundamental propositions of American foreign policy are rooted in the process of nation-building, in domestic social arrangements broadly understood, and in ethnic and class divisions.”³³ He laments the dearth of literature in detailing “the dimensions of that ideology, the roots that sustain it...and the precise relationship it bears to policy.”³⁴ He notices that concrete values and beliefs that have defined foreign policy in the U.S. emerged from the country’s history of liberty. More importantly, these values

²⁹ Bailey, *The Man in the Street*; Louis Wirth, “Domestic Ethnic and Racial Tensions in American Foreign Policy” (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1950), SS/TAIU/EG/7.

³⁰ Robert Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs* (Random House Inc, 1983), xii.

³¹ Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy*, xiii.

³² Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy*, xiv. Freedom House and other think tanks conduct annual studies that quantify these previously non-rational factors to understand the growth and deepening of democratic values around the world.

³³ Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 16.

³⁴ Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2.

and cultural assumptions have a subtle rather than an apparent effect on foreign policy because they were derived from an unconscious consensus in society. Hunt sees the sources of these beliefs and values in the personal opinions of the American elite and in public opinion. These sources, according to Hunt, contain the “symbols and mythology” which are drawn from unconscious social consensus about thoughts, attitudes and ideals that unite the community.³⁵ But what is ideology in this context? Hunt sees ideology as inclusive and consistent “symbols, values, and beliefs” agreed upon by society.³⁶ He identifies race, the American notion of liberty, and revolution as the main ideologies that drove U.S. foreign policy.

In the post-Cold War era, the academic discussion meshed both cultural and ethnic identities to explain how American foreign policy is created. Ernest J. Wilson III’s work, *Diversity and U.S. Foreign Policy* attempts to correlate emerging ethnic diversity at home in the U.S. to the nation’s actions abroad.³⁷ Wilson, whose expertise combines communication and political science, explains that “multicultural relations can affect a country’s ties with immediate neighbors, with overseas diasporas, with distant nations that send immigrants, and with the global community as a whole.”³⁸ For this reason, Wilson sees minority groups’ experiences in the U.S. as encouraging them to advocate broader interactions between the U.S. and their home countries. Such immigrant advocacy groups may have economic, cultural and investment connections to their original nation-states that fuel their activism. For example, African, Asian and Middle Eastern foreign policy advocates in U.S. foreign policy circles promoted the interest of

³⁵ Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 15.

³⁶ Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 12.

³⁷ Ernest J. Wilson III, *Diversity and US Foreign Policy: A Reader* (Psychology Press, 2004).

³⁸ Wilson III, *Diversity and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2.

their countries of origin. While he acknowledges that identity politics can derail foreign policy making, he adds that minorities' views on "international development, intercultural communications, and globalization, gained through past exclusion and marginalization, may in fact help the country, as a whole, design better roadmaps to a more peaceful and cooperative global future."³⁹ The diverse values, insights and views of minorities help construct more culturally sensitive policies towards the world's different countries.

Like Hunt, Andrew W. Stewart, an intelligence officer and scholar at the U.S. army college, recognizes that U.S. foreign policy extends beyond domestic race and religious leanings to include the nation's political understanding of its place in world history as a democratic and free society.⁴⁰ He calls this understanding the New Paradigm. This paradigm is based on the popular belief in American exceptionalism. At the core of this is the belief in "upward social and economic mobility, new concept of social justice and individual liberties under the rules of law, separation of church and state," and the values of democratic accountability that governments derive their power from and to the people.⁴¹ For Americans, this self-perception is at the heart of the unique cultural and social experiences that separate them from other nations and peoples.⁴² So from the

³⁹ Wilson III, *Diversity and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 2.

⁴⁰ Andrew Stewart, "Friction in U.S. Foreign Policy: Cultural Difficulties with the World" (Army War College Carlisle Barracks PA, March 15, 2006), <http://www.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA448800>.

⁴¹ Stewart, "Friction in U.S. Foreign Policy," 6.

⁴² Robert Dallek has explored this notion of liberty as a value proffered by U.S. citizens in their external policy in the post-1945 years when Washington used liberty and democracy as a cover to engage in proxy wars in Vietnam, Cambodia, Iran and Chile, among others. See Dallek, *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs*, xvii–xviii. In another sense, one could argue that this is a reinvention of the idea of the expanding American frontier, a major psychological and cultural marker in U.S. history. In this case, the frontier moved beyond a physical place to be conquered into an abstract idea involving the export of American ideals and culture to a supposedly politically and socially decadent or retrogressing world. For a detailed review of the significance of the frontier in U.S. history, see Frederick

dominance of race, ethnic, religious, commercial and multicultural issues in foreign policy, the role of identity in foreign policy culminated in the rise of democracy as the most distinct national identity defining U.S. policy choices.

According to Colin Cavell, a scholar of U.S. democratization, this faith that Americans hold in the political uniqueness of their polity as a democracy has become an identity and point of national consensus. That conviction about America and of Americans as politically free, secular, capitalist, and socially mobile replaced other considerations for national identity. In the process, a desire to promote “Made-in-America” democracy became a policy pursued in international relations.⁴³

In his paper, *Democracy Promotion as a World Value*, Michael McFaul of Stanford University explains how the fall of Soviet power in 1989 solidified democracy as the universally acceptable form of government in the post-Communist era.⁴⁴ Though still a distant goal for many states, democracy remained the only socially and politically agreeable form of consensus building and power sharing the world over. McFaul claims that U.S. adoption of democracy promotion under President Bill Clinton was a logical outcome of the shifting geopolitical dynamics of a post-Soviet world. But, unfortunately, Clinton tethered democracy promotion to U.S. global security concerns to a point where coercion was validated. In the process, the president legitimized a dominant, U.S.

Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920). Turner argues throughout this book that the frontier defined the U.S. quest for expansion throughout history.

⁴³ Cavell, “The National Endowment for Democracy and the Export of ‘Made-in-America’ Democracy.” In an edited volume, Michael Cox, Joh Ikenberry, and Takashi Inoguchi discuss this problem of U.S. global democracy advocacy. They note the divergent strands of argument regarding democracy, one of which sees democracy promotion as Western arrogance. For more details see Michael Cox, G. John Ikenberry, and Takashi Inoguchi, *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts* (Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁴⁴ Michael McFaul, “Democracy Promotion as a World Value,” *The Washington Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (December 1, 2004): 147–63, <https://doi.org/10.1162/0163660042518189>.

interventionist foreign policy exemplified by actions in Haiti, Kosovo, and Somalia. Rasmus Sondergaard, a Danish scholar of U.S. foreign relations, comes to similar conclusions about U.S. democracy promotion after the end of the Cold War.⁴⁵ He reasons that the promotion of democracy abroad effectively replaced containment as the central American security strategy.⁴⁶ The consensus among these scholars is that promotion of democracy lent a hand to an increasingly militaristic, interventionist foreign policy in Washington after the fall of communism.

Other scholars highlight the economic implications of democracy promotion for U.S. global leadership.⁴⁷ Writing early in the 1990s, the famous liberal American economist W.W. Rostow recommended that the domestic economy and larger U.S. commercial interests must become the vital focus of U.S. national security in the post-Cold War political context.⁴⁸ His words got the ear of the George W.H. Bush and, later, Clinton administration officials. About a decade and half later, Barbara A. Rieffer and Kristan Mercer noticed this emphasis on economic and military policy over democratic enlargement in the presidencies of Clinton and George Walker Bush.⁴⁹ In spite of rehashing the Cold War rhetoric of world democratic advance, U.S. officials adopted pragmatism in foreign policy as was evident in American collaborations with the communist Chinese regime, the governments of Chile and Yugoslavia, and even, Russia

⁴⁵ Rasmus Sinding Søndergaard, "Bill Clinton's 'Democratic Enlargement' and the Securitisation of Democracy Promotion," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 26, no. 3 (July 3, 2015): 534–51, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2015.1067529>.

⁴⁶ Analogous claims have been made by Michael Fowler, a professor at the U.S. Airforce Academy. See Michael W. Fowler, "A Brief Survey of Democracy Promotion in US Foreign Policy," *Democracy and Security* 11, no. 3 (July 3, 2015): 227–47, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17419166.2015.1045974>.

⁴⁷ Greg Schmergel, ed., *U.S. Foreign Policy in the 1990s*, 1st ed. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 1991); Barbara Ann J. Rieffer and Kristan Mercer, "US Democracy Promotion: The Clinton and Bush Administrations," *Global Society* 19, no. 4 (October 1, 2005): 385–408, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600820500242654>; Cavell, "The National Endowment for Democracy and the Export of 'Made-in-America' Democracy."

⁴⁸ Schmergel, *U.S. Foreign Policy in the 1990s*.

⁴⁹ Rieffer and Mercer, "US Democracy Promotion."

after 1989. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United States Information Agency (USIA) and the State Department, all key agencies of democracy promotion, operated independent democracy promotion programmes which led to overlap and duplication in foreign policy. The U.S emphasis on pragmatism and its lack of commitment to organizing a centralized democratic promotion effort led Rieffer and Mercer to conclude that democracy promotion was subordinated to economic and military concerns in post-Cold War U.S. global strategy.

Cavell also argues that Washington stressed economic and military concerns despite preaching democracy promotion.⁵⁰ Through the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the U.S. pushed democratic advancement abroad notwithstanding the ethical concerns of such a policy. According to Cavell, the particular meaning the U.S. attached to democracy abroad favoured a capitalist economic model which opened up markets for American commercial interests. That understanding of democracy attempted to replicate U.S. capitalist style democracy in states around the world with little regard for the specific histories of those states. Democracy promotion was thus a policy for entrenching American economic hegemony. Similarly, Izzah Malik explains that a democratic global political environment allowed for American commercial interests to blossom based on the theory that democracies have stable political climates for capitalist driven market economies.⁵¹ He adds that these commercial interests tied in with national security and humanitarian considerations in guiding U.S. post-Soviet policy.⁵²

⁵⁰ Cavell, "The National Endowment for Democracy and the Export of "Made-in-America" Democracy."

⁵¹ Izzah Akram Malik, "Analyzing the Motivations of US Development Aid to Africa," University of Texas (*Master's Thesis*), 2013.

⁵² Akram Malik, "Analyzing the Motivations of US Development Aid to Africa."

Democracy promotion therefore served to advance the important economic and strategic considerations of U.S. foreign policy in the post-Cold War period.

The literature therefore indicates the centrality of the promotion of democracy to United States foreign policy. In the 20th Century however, the advance of democratization as foreign policy did not always sync well with other concerns such as national security. Democracy advancement became an ideal that supported the vigorous security and economic interests which were the basis of American global power and engagement. The U.S. desired to use democracy to counter political anarchy and instability in the developing world to create a community of democracies under American leadership and suitable for U.S. economic interest.⁵³

Aid and Democratization in Post-Cold War Africa

In the post-Cold War period, African states received the bulk of foreign assistance from the developed northern nations like the United States.⁵⁴ Correspondingly, there was a bulge in Western expectations that recipient states would show improved legal, political, social and economic conditions. For this reason, Nicolas van de Walle, a leading American scholar of Africa, and Danielle Resnick, a senior fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute, advocate in favour of disaggregation of various aid categories when discussing aid and democratization in Africa.⁵⁵ They distinguish between democracy aid and development aid emphasizing that the former has greater focus on positively influencing the emergence of the rule of law and consolidation of

⁵³ Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 391–425.

⁵⁴ Danielle Resnick and Nicolas Van de Walle, *Democratic Trajectories in Africa: Unravelling the Impact of Foreign Aid* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁵⁵ Resnick and Van de Walle, "Introduction: Why Aid and Democracy? Why Africa?" *Democratic Trajectories in Africa: Unravelling the Impact of Foreign Aid*, 1–27.

good governance practices. Democracy aid, they note, is categorized into assistance for transition(ing) democracies or consolidating democracies and that donor focus on democracy aid produce better political dividends in developing countries. Lise Rakner, a Bergen based professor of comparative politics, furthers the discussion by noting the role of foreign democracy aid in sustaining legitimate local activism in Zambia as a means of diminishing fear of the rise of a powerful presidential office.⁵⁶ Her analysis sides with Van de Walle and Resnick's view that democratic consolidation differs from democratic transition and that donors need to know and understand that their support in a post-transition democratic environment furthers political accountability as well as limits the abuse of power by ruling politicians.

However, John Mbaku, a Camerounian born American professor of Economics, and Julius Ihonvbere, a Nigerian professor of Politics, contend that while external support for prodemocracy forces in African democracies is important, these democratizing agents stayed true to their "autonomy, originality, and refuse...prepackaged political programs and methods" from the outside.⁵⁷ They argue that African democratization was a response to the largely negative impact of the structurally adjusted economies of the 1980s. Mbaku and Ihonvbere explain that mass demands for greater inclusion in decision making met varied responses from power holders in Africa in the 1990s. Mbaku and Ihonvbere conclude that democratic change was the outcome of local intents, actions, and persistence with some external donor backing.⁵⁸ This critical view of external support and

⁵⁶ Lise Rakner, *Foreign Aid and Democratic Consolidation in Zambia* (WIDER Working Paper, 2012).

⁵⁷ John Mukum Mbaku and Julius O. Ihonvbere, *Multiparty Democracy and Political Change: Constraints to Democratization in Africa* (Routledge, 2018).

⁵⁸ They add that these internal sources of activism should remain true to democracy promotion with only minimal external input.

assistance for democracy places African people and forces at the forefront in democratization.

Similarly, Kebapetse Lotshwao, a professor of Politics in Botswana, contends that the urban-based Botswana democracy aid recipients thwarted genuine mass democracy. For instance, he decries the Botswana Electoral Commission and political parties' disproportionate share of donor assistance for democracy over the years arguing it entrenched an elite-led democracy that neglected larger development concerns of the masses.⁵⁹ While official foreign assistance programmes boosted institutional capacity to actively challenge for a share of the political space or resist the abuse of office by power wielders, recipients tended to be urban elites whose work furthered capitalist democratic forms. This system of urban concentrated aid activities benefited donors and their commercial partners seeking the right political climate for capitalism in poor countries. However, Lotshwao's view confuses the intent of democracy aid and development assistance. As van Walle and Resnick suggest, democracy assistance has specific governance ends that differ from the more socially oriented and economically focused ends of development aid. Rakner explains in another study that donors' bolstering of the economic and political liberalization process in Zambia inhibited the institutionalization of a strong party system in the country.⁶⁰ Subsequently, executive power expanded to an extent not expected for a consolidating democracy like Zambia. That expansion of power stifled opportunities for the injection of genuine civil society voices in decision making and was antithetical to democratic consolidation and the rule of law.

⁵⁹ Kebapetse Lotshwao, "Donor Assistance and Democracy in Botswana," *Available at SSRN 2497797*, 2014.

⁶⁰ Lise Rakner, "Institutionalizing the Pro-Democracy Movements: The Case of Zambia's Movement for Multiparty Democracy," *Democratization* 18, no. 5 (2011): 1106–24.

While aid offered some needed support to democracy advocates in some recipient countries such as Ghana, Zambia and Botswana, Van De Walle also faults foreign aid for Mali's inability to sustain stability despite large quantities of foreign assistance since the 1990s.⁶¹ Though aid supported the peaceable democracy of Mali, other factors such as increasing gold prices and the devaluation of Mali's currency breathed life into Mali's economy and politics. If anything, Van De Walle argues, aid complicated Malian democracy by affording the executive access to resources to expand its powers. Foreign assistance also engendered "a growing socio-cultural cleavage between urban elites and the rest of the population."⁶² As Mali's case shows, foreign assistance did not always lead to democratic stability. As these studies demonstrate, the peculiarities of local conditions define how far aid effects democratic change.

In contrast to the above critical scholars, Clark Gibbon, Barak Hoffman, and Ryan Jablonski, all political scientists, explain that it was donor visibility and vigilance in the disbursement and usage of assistance in the 1990s that helped curb recipient governments use of aid to perpetuate themselves in power.⁶³ Aid monitoring hindered incumbents' ability to buy off electoral coalitions. In this way, power holders, autocrats particularly, conceded ground to other constituencies clamoring for a share of the political space and of political power. This approach helped limit executive power while allowing for local ownership of the democratizing process. That monitoring of aid explains why local civil society groups, like aid organizations, added to democracy and accountability in Africa.

⁶¹ Nicolas Van de Walle, *Foreign Aid in Dangerous Places: The Donors and Mali's Democracy* (WIDER Working Paper, 2012).

⁶² Van de Walle, *Foreign Aid in Dangerous Places*, 3.

⁶³ Clark C. Gibson, Barak D. Hoffman, and Ryan S. Jablonski, "Did Aid Promote Democracy in Africa? The Role of Technical Assistance in Africa's Transitions," *World Development* 68 (2015): 323–35.

Aside from limiting political excesses, some form of foreign assistance was used to strengthen local groups to make them more visible not just in politics but in debates over policy. Julie Hearn, a professor of Politics at Lancaster University, finds that foreign assistance programmes in African countries such as Ghana, South Africa, and Uganda elevated the vocality of civil society groups in ways that afforded them profound influence over the form and content of debates about democracy, local government, and women. In Ghana, aid givers favoured civil society groups championing liberal economic ideals.⁶⁴ Aid recipients in Ghana, the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) among them, were outspoken in the discussions over economic policy such as the Structural Adjustment Program among other liberal leaning economic policies of the 1990s. Such civil society aid recipients' support for liberal, capitalist economic policies convinced Mark Robinson, a governance expert on Africa, that such democratic aid in Africa was a concealed form of "free market racketeering."⁶⁵

The scholarship thus shows that aid helped democratization in some respects but critical views such as Van de Walles', Mbaku and Ihonvbere's, and Lotshwao's challenge such idealistic views of foreign assistance in post-Cold War democratization in Africa.

U.S. Africa Policy

U.S. policy in Africa did not always align with the African mass interest in democracy as a panacea to the development challenges facing the continent. Michael Clough, a scholar of U.S. foreign policy in the Third World, argues that U.S. Cold War strategy in Africa sacrificed democracy for conformity, which in turn bred "injustice,

⁶⁴ Julie Hearn, "Foreign Aid, Democratisation and Civil Society in Africa: A Study of South Africa, Ghana and Uganda," IDS Discussion Paper 368, 2010.

⁶⁵ Mark Robinson, "Civil Society in Africa: A Conceptual Overview" (Mimeo, 1998).

corruption, and economic mismanagement” for much of the conflict.⁶⁶ He further contends that since the 1980s, American policies overlooked Africa in favour of supposedly more important domains elsewhere in the world such as South East Asia, the Middle East and the Gulf Region. Clough calls for the U.S. to create and pursue policies to engage Africa effectively to “foster and sustain African civil society...promote democracy and development.”⁶⁷ Like earlier studies on democratization, Clough acknowledges social forces in the discussion of political change and democracy in Africa. In a similar way, Raymond W. Copson, a liberal foreign policy historian previously of the Library of Congress, explains that fairness and justice was lacking in U.S. policy in Africa. He acknowledges that evangelical groups and the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) put significant pressure on U.S. policy in Africa. However, he fears a loss of U.S. influence in Africa because the U.S. has been “perceived as unfair and unjust in its foreign policy.”⁶⁸ Copson notes that attention to U.S. moral responsibility is warranted because black citizens brought from Africa were forced to contribute to the “economic development of the American South and the country as a whole.”⁶⁹ Despite these black nation-building contributions, Washington stood aloof from the continent for much of history. Not even Liberia, an offshoot of U.S. ex-slaves, could sustain U.S. attention for long. Neglect therefore characterized the U.S. policy towards Africa, according to Copson. In his opinion, a reversal was necessary to ensure fairness and justice in U.S.-Africa relations.

⁶⁶ Michael Clough, *Free at Last?: US Policy toward Africa and the End of the Cold War* (Council on Foreign Relations, 1992), 1.

⁶⁷ Clough, *Free at Last?:* 3–4.

⁶⁸ Raymond W. Copson, *The United States in Africa: Bush Policy and Beyond* (London: Zed Books, 2007), 2.

⁶⁹ Copson, *The United States in Africa:* 3.

Peter Schrader, a longtime scholar of U.S. policy in Africa, holds the view that U.S. policymakers tended to ignore the African continent until some sort of politico-military crisis on the continent grabbed global attention.⁷⁰ Examining continuity and change in U.S. Africa policy over the decades, Schrader concludes that “dominant patterns of US interventionist practices on the continent” were prevalent leading to policy swings from neglect to occasional attention and then back to neglect.⁷¹ Donald Rothchild and Edmond J. Keller, political scientists at the University of California, Los Angeles, call attention to the need for the U.S. to abandon its policy of neglect and help African governments manage their security challenges as well as find a way to negotiate issues such as debts, the fight against AIDS, and environmental concerns.⁷² These security, economic and human concerns raised in Rothchild and Keller's work might be viewed as predicated on Schraeder's contention, that for much of history, Africa has been on the periphery of U.S. policy. These scholarly views encourage us to examine U.S. engagement with Africa in the post-Cold War years with a focus on how Washington promoted free enterprises and democratic institutions in Ghana.

The Project

Building on the above literature, this thesis examines how the U.S., in working to redefine its relations with the world after the Cold War, reoriented its approach towards Africa by emphasizing the promotion of democracy, particularly the adoption of American style institutions, as the panacea to the political and economic challenges facing the continent. I make the case that American national identity, namely its

⁷⁰ Peter J. Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy Toward Africa: Incrementalism, Crisis and Change*, vol. 31 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 2.

⁷¹ Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy Toward Africa*, 8.

⁷² Donald S. Rothchild, *Africa-US Relations: Strategic Encounters* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2006).

democracy, the rule of law, and press freedom informed much of Washington's post-Cold War foreign aid policies in Africa. Further, it is argued that though U.S. domestic ideology shaped its foreign policy towards Africa, targets of that policy did not always act as people to be taught or dictated to in the art of government and democratization. Using a case study of Ghana, I contend that local democracy activists and national leaders blended western concepts of democracy with their own history, indigenous political experiences, and local contexts to fashion a workable constitutional framework to serve administrative needs and to deliver desired public goods. The result was that those democratic changes were more Ghanaian than American even if the overall idea of a democratic framework at a national level was originally an European idea.

The choice of Ghana for the case study is important for two reasons: firstly, Ghana emerged as an early democracy reformer in the late 1980s when the Cold War ended; secondly, it consistently ranked high for democracy and economic development among democratized countries in Africa in the post-Cold War period.

Methodology

Major Research Questions

- (a) What competing discourses led to the emergence of democracy promotion in the U.S. foreign aid policies of the George H.W. Bush and William Clinton presidencies?
- (b) In what ways did U.S. aid efforts contribute to democracy consolidation after the Cold War in Ghana?
- (c) How did the Ghanaian people respond to U.S. democracy promotion efforts after the Cold War?

(d) How did the Ghanaian people shape the pace and form of democratic reform in Ghana's transition to the Fourth Republic in 1993?

Primary Sources

To address the research questions above, I utilized a variety of primary sources. For discussions and opinions on foreign policy under the George H.W. Bush and the early Bill Clinton presidencies, I accessed the online archives of *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times*. Based on these sources, politicians, journalists and policy makers' views on the future of U.S. foreign and aid policy after the Cold War are examined. More specifically, I explore the connections between official thoughts and their policy manifestations in aid allocations to Africa from bodies such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Census Office. Perhaps most importantly, I examine how those allocations correlated with democratic markers such as human rights, free elections, and the free press in Ghana.

In addition to these newspapers, I used information from sources such as the USAID Trend Data, Freedom House's measures of press freedom, and trade figures from the U.S. census office. This project also benefited from Africa Elections Database's information on the election histories of Ghana, Zambia, Botswana, and Benin.

To evaluate Ghanaian responses to U.S. efforts to transplant its politics into Ghanaian political space, I conducted archival research at the Public Records, Archives Administration Department (PRAAD) and the Balm Library of the University of Ghana, both located in Accra. At these sites, I researched mainly the *Ghanaian Times* and *The People's Daily Graphic* (later the *Daily Graphic* after January 1994) newspapers for government policy thoughts, opposition politicians' activities, and other citizen related

activities in promoting democracy. These state-owned papers were the most widely circulated in the 1980s and 1990s. They covered not only events throughout the country but provided a platform for all politicians and activists to send messages to people across the social, economic and geographic strata of Ghanaian society while benefiting from the highly professional journalism of those papers. As state newspapers, they were well funded so editors could hire highly professional staff who helped entrench a culture of independence.⁷³

Conclusion

Albert Einstein observed that the “democratic trait...the relationship between individual people and the attitude they maintain towards one another” was a deeply ingrained value in the American psyche.⁷⁴ However, while democracy promotion headlined America’s foreign policy in the post-Soviet era, it was superseded by continuing strategic and domestic economic commitments. Using a case study approach, this work contends that while Washington attempted to promote American political institutions in Ghana, the Ghanaian people demonstrated agency in owning and defining the pace and shape of democratic reform and progress in their country. In the process, Ghana showed that democracy is as much a universal concept as it is an American one.

⁷³ Yaw Twumasi, “The Newspaper Press and Political Leadership in Developing Nations: The Case of Ghana, 1964 to 1978,” *Gazette (Leiden, Netherlands)* 26, no. 1 (1980): 1–16. Cameron Duodu had opposed the foreign policy of Kwesi Busia, Ghanaian prime minister, in the early 1970s. He was dismissed from his role as editor of the *Daily Graphic*. The resulting tussle between government and the media provided much needed agency for the state newspapers in subsequent years. Recalling press freedom in the 1980s and 1990s, Richard Jeffries and Clare Thomas argue that private newspapers during the PNDC military regime were rather “poorly produced and rather tacky newssheets” but enjoyed as much freedom as state-owned media. With the exception of *The Ghanaian Chronicle* and *The Christian Chronicle*’s brushes with the law, Jeffries and Thomas suggest that the PNDC avoided “curbing press freedom even when...opposition newspapers descended into muckraking and mudslinging.” See Richard Jeffries and Clare Thomas, “The Ghanaian Elections of 1992,” *African Affairs* 92, no. 368 (1993): 331–66.

⁷⁴ Fred Jerome and Rodger Taylor, *Einstein on Race and Racism* (Rutgers University Press, 2005), 140.

CHAPTER 1

**THE BIRTH OF DEMOCRACY PROMOTION: AN ANALYSIS OF U.S.
NATIONAL DISCOURSE**

“My administration will stand up for democracy. We will offer international assistance to emerging fragile democracies.” Bill Clinton, Democratic presidential candidate, 1992.⁷⁵

This chapter examines the discourse and exchanges within policy and popular circles in the United States that enabled the emergence of democracy promotion as the central foreign policy tenet of Washington in the Post-Cold War era. It posits that American policymakers and public discourse setters couched democracy promotion as an extension of U.S. moral and political values to the world to establish likeminded political states that would sustain the rule of law and eliminate autocracy.⁷⁶

Throughout the Cold War, U.S. and Soviet strategies involved undermining each other in many proxy wars across the world. After the peace treaties were signed at Paris in February 1947, the U.S. and the USSR became involved in prolonged conflicts in Viet Nam and North Korea. In Afghanistan, the U.S. aided Afghan insurgents from 1979 to 1989 to battle the USSR when Moscow invaded that country to support a puppet regime.

⁷⁵ “Excerpts from Clinton’s Speech on Foreign Policy Leadership,” *New York Times*, August 14, 1992. This speech was one of the important foreign policy statements Clinton made in the run up to the 1992 elections.

⁷⁶ Dean V. Babst, “Elective Governments: A Force for Peace,” *The Wisconsin Sociologist* 3, no. 1 (1964): 9–14. By the Democratic Peace, Babst meant that elected governments are less likely to go to war because there is a large pool of public feelings and opinions they have to account to. Also, due to many constitutional processes involved in democracies going to war, it is assumed that democracies are unlikely to reach a consensus soon enough to allow democratic leaders to declare war on other states. The basis of this theory goes back to Immanuel Kant who gave rough outlines to this concept in his 1795 piece, *On Perpetual Peace* (Broadview Press, 2015). This understanding of the U.S. democratic leadership framed the Democratic Peace hypothesis from the late 1960s which became popular in the 1980s onwards and informed the development of democratic promotion as post-Cold War policy towards Africa.

In the early 1980s, President Ronald Reagan's administration increased U.S. defense expenditure to draw Moscow into an arms race. Massive hikes in U.S. defense spending supported the buildup of strategic nuclear weapons and the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).⁷⁷ The cost of these American offensive and defense initiatives meant that the USSR had to make a choice either to challenge American military power or focus on domestic issues. Many analysts believe that the USSR took the bait, leading to an increase in military spending, crumbling infrastructure at home, and a weakened domestic economy.⁷⁸

By the mid-1980s, the Soviet economy was in crisis with unemployment, corruption, bureaucratic inefficiency, and economic mismanagement exacerbating an already restrictive political climate.⁷⁹ To resolve these problems, Mikhail Gorbachev, the general secretary of the Politburo, emerged as an agent of reform in the Soviet Union. He helped reverse the course of Cold War tensions by pulling out of superpower competitions as well as implementing much needed economic reforms at home. He also signed the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, withdrew Soviet troops from Afghanistan, granted autonomy to satellite states in Eastern Europe, and supported German reunification.⁸⁰ It was during this period that American policy makers vigorously revisited the promotion of democracy as central to future U.S. policy around the world.

⁷⁷ McGeorge Bundy et al., "The President's Choice: Star Wars or Arms Control," *Foreign Affairs*, 63 (1984): 264; Frances Fitzgerald, *Way out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War* (Simon and Schuster, 2001). The SDI programme aimed to build space-based missile defense systems to counter Soviet Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) in the event of an attack on the United States.

⁷⁸ Nick Bisley, *The End of the Cold War and the Causes of Soviet Collapse* (Springer, 2004); Andrew E. Busch, "Ronald Reagan and the Defeat of the Soviet Empire," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (1997): 451–66.

⁷⁹ For a detailed economic analysis of Soviet economic decline, see William Easterly and Stanley Fischer, "What We Can Learn from the Soviet Collapse," *Finance and Development* 31, no. 4 (1994): 2–5.

⁸⁰ Vladislav Zubok, "Gorbachev and the End of the Cold War: Perspectives on History and Personality," *Cold War History* 2, no. 2 (2002): 61–100.

1.1.The Resuscitation of an Idea: The Reagan Administration’s Emphasis on Democracy

In 1988, the year before the end of the Cold War, the U.S. Vice President George W.H. Bush declared that “America has set in motion the major changes underway in the world today- the growth of democracy, the spread of free enterprise, the creation of a world market in goods and ideas. For the foreseeable future, no other nation, or group of nations, will step forward to assume leadership.”⁸¹ Bush’s assertion came as U.S. hegemony was entering a different phase – one of unrivalled global power. The change, brought about by the dying strength of the Soviet Union in the East-West struggle for world supremacy, cemented the U.S position as the leading global power. This shift required a rethink of U.S. external policy to synchronize with its unipolar authority after 1989. Early policy predictions from the White House lauded U.S. cultural and political exceptionalism, a recurrent theme in American history, as the inevitable path for states emerging from Soviet influence who were seeking a path to economic prosperity and political maturity. Bush’s comment not only highlighted this emerging dominant theme in foreign policy but opened a possibility for decision makers to pursue this mindset as a foreign policy goal.

Long before the end of the Cold War, the Reagan White House began presenting the possibility of exporting the U.S. political experience to create a community of free states that would sustain world peace. These aims were hinted at through speeches and documents on tactical decisions made within the context of the East-West struggle in the 1980s. Though a staunch realist, Reagan often couched his remarks about the U.S. global interest as part of its efforts towards “the promotion of democracy and economic

⁸¹ Stephen S. Rosenfeld, “The American Century Still?” *Washington Post*, August 5, 1988.

growth,” important liberal ideals.⁸² Those efforts at democracy promotion included encouraging foreign direct investment to recipient states, expansion of foreign aid programs to poor countries, and boosting American involvement in humanitarian causes around the world.⁸³

The idea of pursuing democracy as the new frontier in American expansionism centered firmly on the developing world where free political institutions were supposed to be nascent. In 1984, the administration demanded massive aid increases for Latin American states from Congress. Justifying the request, the administration argued that it would “advance democracy in the Latin American region.”⁸⁴ Though later events in Nicaragua and El Salvador showed that Reagan had used U.S. power and resources for questionable causes, the administration’s claims about democratic values as justifications for its actions highlighted the growing importance of democratization as a foreign policy goal in Washington. But the promotion of democracy was aimed at specifically exporting the American model of democracy to the world. Cavill explains that that Made-in-American democracy export emerged from U.S. view of democracy as a unique national identity that needed to be promoted to the rest of the world.

Nevertheless, the realpolitik of the Cold War’s political and propaganda strategies limited the Reagan policymakers’ ability to propagate American style democratic processes and institutions across the world. Even in the early 1980s, Soviet power

⁸² Bernard Gwertzman, “Reagan Seeks Big Rise in Latin Aid,” *New York Times*, February 2, 1984, Special to the NYT edition.

⁸³ A. Cooper Drury, Richard Stuart Olson, and Douglas A. Van Belle, “The Politics of Humanitarian Aid: US Foreign Disaster Assistance, 1964–1995,” *The Journal of Politics* 67, no. 2 (2005): 454–73; Steven C. Poe and Rangsim Sirirangsi, “Human Rights and US Economic Aid to Africa,” *International Interactions* 18, no. 4 (1993): 309–22; Anne Boschini and Anders Olofsgård, “Foreign Aid: An Instrument for Fighting Communism?,” *The Journal of Development Studies* 43, no. 4 (2007): 622–48.

⁸⁴ Gwertzman, “Reagan Seeks Big Rise in Latin Aid.”

persisted in international politics, especially, in the so-called ‘Third World.’⁸⁵ The Reagan administration recognized Soviet influence in this region when it stated, for instance, that “the countries of the Caribbean basin are threatened by the worst economic depression since the 1930s as well as by a powerful Soviet-Cuban-Nicaraguan drive to expand their power and influence” in the world.⁸⁶ In response to Soviet power, Reagan advisors recommended increased appropriations to support the ousting of pro-Communist autocrats from power in the developing world. In their place, Reagan hoped to create democratic administrations that would help establish freedom and liberal political orders in those developing countries. The most significant tool to achieve the democratic ends, in the context of the Cold War, was foreign aid.

During the Cold War, the United States supported regimes sympathetic to U.S global security interests while showing hostility to antagonistic states. In this sense, the president entrenched Cold War impulses of supporting amiable regimes and or showing hostility towards antagonistic ones. Elizabeth Schmidt and Moses Awinsong contend that aid was used for the reward and punishment of friends and foes alike in Washington’s foreign policy.⁸⁷ But in the post-Cold War period, Washington used aid to support the replication of the political values, institutions and experiences of the U.S. in other countries to create a core of democracies for meaningful engagement.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ The “Third World” is used interchangeably with “Developing world” in this work. The expression “Third World” was popular during the Cold War to mark the neutral stance of many countries in Africa, Asia and South America in the East-West struggle for global leadership. As economic and technological concerns rose to pre-eminence after the Cold War, the corresponding term, “Developing World” replaced the Third World concept. While still referring to the same geopolitical space, the new expression shifts focus from a strategic basis for defining countries to a more material, economic connotation underlying such definitions.

⁸⁶ Gwertzman, “Reagan Seeks Big Rise in Latin Aid.”

⁸⁷ Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa: From the Cold War to the War on Terror*; Awinsong, “The Power of the Periphery: Aid, Mutuality and Cold War U.S-Ghana Relations, 1957-1966.”

⁸⁸ This teleological American view of democracy is reinforced in Cox, Ikenberry, and Inoguchi, *American Democracy Promotion*.

The threat of mutually assured destruction put powers on constant alert during the period before 1989. These Cold War tensions contributed to the rise of the Reagan Doctrine, a set of American convictions about limiting Soviet expansion across the world.⁸⁹ Clough notes that this U.S. preoccupation with larger strategic goals in the Cold War consigned democracy promotion to the backburner in Washington.⁹⁰ Within the Cold War context, the American emphasis of strategy over democratization emboldened many African leaders, convinced of American support, to further “injustice, corruption, and economic mismanagement” in nations such as Ethiopia and Zaire.⁹¹ To enable Washington’s core decision-makers to focus on strategy alone, much of the work of democracy promotion was delegated to independent American institutions, such as the International Republican Institute(ARI), the National Democratic Institute(NDI), and the National Endowment for Democracy(NED).⁹² These bodies were funded by Congress but were not under the direct supervision of executive authority nor took directives from any executive or legislative authority in the Reagan administration.

By 1986, a growing consensus on foreign policy emerged that united Democrats and Republicans on Capitol Hill in placing human rights, democracy and the environment at the centre of the discourse on foreign policy. Robert Tucker of the John Hopkins

⁸⁹ The Reagan Doctrine effectively sums up the realist mentality of the Reagan administration. At its core, the doctrine advocated massive American financial, military, and intelligence support to anti-communist politicians, rebels and activists to unseat Soviet backed Communist regimes around the world. The Reagan Doctrine became the basis of U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union in the last decade of the Cold War. Under this plan, for instance, Reagan supplied vast military resources to Afghan rebels to counter the Soviet invasion of that country in the 1980s. For details of the Reagan Doctrine see, Chester Pach, “The Reagan Doctrine: Principle, Pragmatism, and Policy,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2006): 75–88.

⁹⁰ Clough, *Free at Last?*.

⁹¹ Clough, *Free at Last?*: 1.

⁹² The International Republic Institute was initially named National Republican Institute of International Affairs. The National Democratic Institute was also earlier called National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDIIA). I use the new names.

University's School of International Studies reminisced in 1986 that "Human rights, which was, to say the least, played down in 1981, now has greater importance."⁹³ In Congress, the new consensus on foreign policy found expression in the willingness of the House and Senate to essentialize democracy in the way the United States defined its relations with other states. For instance, Representative Bob Walker (Republican, PA), speaking about the House's foreign policy considerations in 1986, called for the House to "evolve the idea that the strongest anticommunist position was in supporting majority governments that would maintain democracy."⁹⁴ The House's position reflected a practical navigation of both the real Communist threat to Western freedom and the idealism of supporting the spread of free institutions in Third World states. This idealism emerged from a sense that planting democratic institutions in developing countries replicated U.S. freedom abroad. Robert S. Pastorino, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Inter-American Affairs, emphasized this in his view that "the Reagan Administration has a fundamental interest in the preservation and promotion of democratic institutions in Central America" as indeed it was interested in doing so in many other places.⁹⁵ The rhetoric of democratization was thus rooted in a need to extend domestic political experiences and arrangements to other countries. Hunt and Stewart see the basis of democracy export effort in the domestic consensus that places democratization at the heart of American identity.⁹⁶ Despite this emphasis on spreading

⁹³ Robert S. Greenberger, "Liberals and Conservatives in the U.S. Are Seeking a Foreign Policy Consensus: Foreign Insight," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 31, 1986.

⁹⁴ Greenberger, "Liberals and Conservatives in the U.S. Are Seeking a Foreign Policy Consensus."

⁹⁵ Robert S. Pastorino, "Tyranny Yields to Democracy in Central America," *New York Times*, May 14, 1988.

⁹⁶ Stewart, "Friction in U.S. Foreign Policy"; Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy*.

democracy, the Reagan Doctrine defined much of American foreign policy during the closing years of the Cold War.⁹⁷

At the same time, the 1980s afforded the opportunity for politicians and policy makers to reevaluate and reposition democracy in the discourse on U.S. foreign policy. That new direction was taken in the conviction that it was America's responsibility to spread the political processes and institutions that had worked for it to other states to create a global community of free, democratic states. According to Thomas Carothers of the Carnegie Center, this perspective led the Reagan administration to intervene militarily in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador to further the establishment of liberal democratic regimes in those countries.⁹⁸ However, while democracy promotion became the basis of Reagan policy, the means towards the ends were not always democratic.⁹⁹ It became apparent that the democracy rhetoric was invoked by the administration when it suited American economic and security interests in other lands. Public reaction to such unsanctioned use of force in places such as Honduras and Guatemala eventually compelled Reagan to source out democracy promotion to private U.S. think tanks.

From 1983 onwards, private institutions funded by the U.S. government took on the active advancement of democracy. These organizations included the National Endowment for Democracy, the International Republican Institute, and the National

⁹⁷ The Iran-Contra Affair was an example of the president's application of the Reagan Doctrine. Though Iran was under an arms embargo, Reagan covertly supplied it with important military equipment and technology through Israeli interlocutors for significant financial gains for the U.S. Later, part of the proceeds from the Iranian deal, \$18 million in total, was diverted by the National Security Council to supply anti-Sandinista elements battling the Nicaragua Communist government. This complex foreign policy fallout of the Reagan presidency not only put Reagan in a bad light but showed that democracy promotion, as a foreign policy, could be used for illegal purposes.

⁹⁸ Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy: US Policy toward Latin America in the Reagan Years* (University of California Press, 1993).

⁹⁹ Søndergaard, "Bill Clinton's 'Democratic Enlargement' and the Securitisation of Democracy Promotion."

Democratic Institute. The NED, established on November 18, 1983, started its pro-democracy agenda in many developing countries. For the 1986 fiscal year alone, about \$54 million was expended by the Endowment to bolster organizations, individuals and causes that promised political change and democratic growth in states suffering right-wing dictatorships around the world. The capital injection assisted labour unions, political parties and journalists in states with fragile or non-existent democracies to become effective advocates for the return to civilian or majoritarian rule.¹⁰⁰ The novelty of the NED's work was "a promotion of democracy and free enterprise, that mixes public funds and private interests" through annual appropriation from Congress.¹⁰¹ Think-tanks like the NED were left to decide on all matter of administration, expenditure and the forms of engagement to champion in their activities around the world.

This private effort departed from the clandestine operations of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in earlier decades where the intelligence body provided help to dissident groups in the Third World to overthrow legitimate governments. According to John Brian Atwood, president of the NDI, those secretive activities of the CIA's before the 1980s were responsible for the "terrible damages to our own values" because the intelligence body's work "reflected a misunderstanding of what our values as democratic society were all about."¹⁰² Makers and influencers of policy like Atwood reflected a deepening sense of confidence in the superiority and moral strength of American democracy as a model for global adoption. Given the open and transparent work of the NED, he saw it as representing the best outlet to advertise U.S. democracy. Atwood's

¹⁰⁰ David K. Shipler, "Missionaries of Democracy: U.S. Aid for Global Pluralism," *New York Times*, June 1, 1986.

¹⁰¹ Shipler, "Missionaries of Democracy."

¹⁰² Shipler, "Missionaries of Democracy."

view resonates with the argument made by Andrew Stewart that the U.S. perception of its political, social and cultural exceptionalism stimulated its attempts at exporting democracy to other countries.¹⁰³

The NED was by no means the only democracy advocate under the Reagan Administration. The IRI and the NDI had similar programmes running in other countries. David K. Shipler reported that while Democrats, through the NDI, supported conferences and seminars for a variety of parties to strengthen centrist and leftist politics, the Republicans used the IRI to help parties in other countries that held similar conservative American positions on foreign policy and economic issues.¹⁰⁴ These organizations therefore worked towards exporting specific American political brands abroad. However, the close interest both organizations shared in spreading the rule of law meant that U.S. democracy promotion support favoured parties championing distinctly American political forms of organizations, thoughts and institutions. Such attempts confirm Hunt's conclusion that American notions of liberty, expressed in political organization and association, is the main driver of U.S. external policy.¹⁰⁵

However, as Cavell points out, this American approach was not always consistent with the local political contexts of targeted nations; it neglected the peculiar histories of countries to whom democracy was supposedly exported to.¹⁰⁶ The IRI, for instance, sent a weighty amount of capital support to Nicaragua in 1986 and to other conservative elements elsewhere opposed to communists and other left-wing ruling forces.¹⁰⁷ By the

¹⁰³ Stewart, "Friction in U.S. Foreign Policy."

¹⁰⁴ Shipler, "Missionaries of Democracy."

¹⁰⁵ Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy*

¹⁰⁶ Cavell, "The National Endowment for Democracy and the Export of "Made-in-America" Democracy."

¹⁰⁷ International Republican Institute, "IRI Advances Democracy, Rule of Law, and Free-Market Economics," 1995, <http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/1995%20Annual%20Report.pdf>.

1990s, the IRI extended its work to Africa where it held conferences for right leaning political groups.¹⁰⁸ Democrats, on the other hand, tended to support political groups that had strong left-leaning democratic credentials and worked or campaigned on a platform of liberal social democratic ideas. That explains why labour unions in Poland and France received substantial aid from the NDI to further their activities. Private IRI and NDI funds were used to help in fronting political pluralism in countries the world over out of American “confidence in its own virtues and a conviction that democracy should be supported publicly and proudly,” according to Shipler of the *New York Times*.¹⁰⁹ That proud advocacy for global democratization issued from Americans’ strong attachment to their democratic identity. That identity, according to Hunt, included values and beliefs about freedom that had an apparent rather than subtle effect on foreign policy.¹¹⁰ National ideology had the capacity to developed concretely to a point where it shaped the direction of U.S. foreign relations.

One motivation for U.S. democracy promotion in the 1980s was the conviction in Washington that a global community of democracies would prevent war because democracies rarely go to war against each other. President Clinton argued later that, “Democracies don’t attack each other. Ultimately the best strategy to ensure our security and to build a durable peace is to support the advance of democracy elsewhere.”¹¹¹ Similarly, Henry Nau, an opinion writer, later summarized that there is “the need and opportunity to build democracies and free markets in the former communist countries and parts of the developing world. Because democracies do not fight one another, this policy

¹⁰⁸ Frankie Asare-Donkoh, “Democracy and Human Rights,” *Daily Graphic*, August 11, 1994.

¹⁰⁹ Shipler, “Missionaries of Democracy”.

¹¹⁰ Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy*.

¹¹¹ “Excerpts from President Clinton’s State of the Union Message,” *New York Times*, January 26, 1994.

is not idealism but a realistic investment in national security.”¹¹² These understandings of the relationship between American rule of law and global harmony essentialized and magnified U.S. values and institutions as the standard for the developing world.

1.2.The Firming of Democracy Promotion: From the Bush to the Clinton Years

The triumph of democracy over communism after the fall of the Berlin Wall popularized democracy among states that were coming to terms with a new global political environment. In Eastern Europe, democracies quickly sprang up in Poland, Hungary, Croatia, Romania, and Ukraine, among others, where previously the Soviet Union’s influence held sway. Of all the industrialized states of the north, the United States was looked up to as a lifeline for these countries who were casting aside an age of political oppression and embracing democratic change. The expectations were founded on America’s preeminence as the richest and most politically powerful state in world politics. Despite these Eastern European hopes, there were concerns about the level of enthusiasm the U.S showed towards this wave of democratic change.

The George H.W. Bush presidency responded to global post-Cold War anticipations in a variety of ways. While President Bush continued to push critical aspects of foreign policy such as leading the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), promoting democracy remained a key talking point in Washington’s shifting policies towards non-Western states. An important approach the administration adopted involved the twinning of democracy to aid in foreign policy. This new commitment, made possible through the ending of Cold War hostilities, encouraged Bush to request Congress “to give

¹¹² Henry Nau, “The Moral Argument for U.S. Leadership,” *The Wall Street Journal*, August 26, 1993.

him greater flexibility in allocating aid funds to help leaders who favor democracy”¹¹³ The commitment was intended by the White House to help positively discriminate among states in U.S. aid programmes through presidential access to a contingency fund to further democracy advocacy around the world.¹¹⁴ At its core, the approach normalized the use of American aid to help regimes with domestic and foreign policies similar to Washington’s.¹¹⁵

The fate of several Eastern European states such as Ukraine, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria were tied to this policy shift. Eastern European hopes were high that the U.S. would rise up to its promise of democratic global leadership after the end of the Cold War.¹¹⁶ These states needed funds to make a head start as credible democracies and Washington could not turn a blind eye to these newcomers who set about, in typical American fashion, setting up free enterprises, free press, free judiciaries, and independent election commissions. But the timing of Eastern Europe’s freedom proved disconcerting to Washington. The U.S. was battling rising deficits and political problems in Panama, an important state to U.S. trade connections with Pacific nations. To mitigate the economic pressure as well as fund East European democracies, Republican Senator Robert Dole (R-Kansas) proposed, in 1990, to cut foreign aid to the top ten recipients, particularly Israel and Egypt, to free up capital “in order to help less-favoured

¹¹³ John M. Goshko, “Overhauling Assistance Policy: Differing Philosophies Emerge: Bush Wants ‘Flexibility’; Hill Urges Retooling,” *Washington Post*, May 18, 1990.

¹¹⁴ Goshko, “Overhauling Assistance Policy”.

¹¹⁵ Schmidt, *Foreign Intervention in Africa: From the Cold War to the War on Terror*; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

¹¹⁶ Rosenfeld, “The American Century Still?”

democracies in Eastern Europe and Latin America.”¹¹⁷ The proposal was defeated through the powerful Israeli lobby on Capitol Hill. But those suggestions followed directly from Bush’s emphasis on grafting aid to democracy in U.S. foreign policy. Dole’s Democratic colleague, Senator Patrick J. Leahy also suggested a common ground between Congress and the White House to take advantage of “an historic opportunity to reshape our foreign aid to keep up with today’s changing world.”¹¹⁸

A key motive for the extension of assistance to countries such as Poland, Ukraine, Romania and Georgia, was to give preeminence to U.S. global leadership. In the *Wall Street Journal*, Nau suggested that such assistance be used to showcase U.S. moral leadership in a distrustful world. In fact, Nau believed U.S. leadership would be highly regarded because “the world tends to trust America’s leadership, over that of more homogenous societies, because America copes daily with ethnic and racial issues within its own society.”¹¹⁹ Nau’s understanding echoed Hunt’s argument that U.S. foreign policy was “rooted in the process of nation-building, in domestic social arrangements broadly understood.”¹²⁰ Redeploying foreign aid for democracy emerged from a bipartisan desire, as seen in Dole and Leahy’s bipartisan consensus, to support new free societies and to cement the U.S. position as leader of the free world.

The firming of democracy promotion in early post-Soviet days in the U.S. was by no means restricted to organizations and politicians alone. Paul T. Haire, a former aid consultant at the USAID, suggested that the U.S. prioritize “countries that adopt reforms” when allocating aid. Reforms meant liberal democratic institutions since, in his words,

¹¹⁷ Helen Dewar and Al Kamen, “Cut in Aid to Israel Proposed: Dole Plan Would Help Emerging Democracies,” *Washington Post*, January 17, 1990.

¹¹⁸ Goshko, “Overhauling Assistance Policy.”

¹¹⁹ Nau, “The Moral Argument for U.S. Leadership.”

¹²⁰ Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy*, 16.

“the new emphasis in foreign assistance...political pluralism (free elections) and economic pluralism (free markets) has grown from the perception that one-party government and state-controlled economies have always become mechanisms for corruption and oppression.”¹²¹ To avoid continuing political repression in the post-Cold War period, the United States, it was thought, should support political and market reforms in developing countries. By 1991, the emphasis on aid had notched so high that Congress conditioned aid on progress in implementing liberal political processes in recipient states. For example, Congress declared that it would “provide aid once Angolan reforms take place” in response to Angolan President Dos Santos’ request for aid during a visit to Washington in 1991.¹²² The imposition of conditions for democratic reforms in return for aid constituted a growing broader consensus on the export of U.S. democracy to encourage African countries to continue their democratization.¹²³

Aid conditionality was not peculiar to the United States alone. As Catherine McArdle Kelleher recalls, conditionality also grew in importance in European Union aid programmes to countries in Africa in the 1990s.¹²⁴ Closely tied to the U.S. and E.U. were the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Van De Walle and Resnick indicate that aid conditionality for democratization became possible because the U.S. used its voting power and control of these global financial institutions to strengthen conditionalities for aid to sponsor its political will around the world.¹²⁵ But, as developing world leaders became more accountable to donors, democracy suffered

¹²¹ Paul J. Haire, “A Letter to the Editor,” *Washington Post*, August 31, 1990.

¹²² Robert S. Greenberger, “Angola Is Hoping End of Cold War Will Offer Benefits: Washington Insight,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 16, 1991.

¹²³ “Africa Awakens,” *The Wall Street Journal*, April 8, 1991.

¹²⁴ Catherine McArdle Kelleher, “8 Western Europe: Challenges of the Post-Cold War Era,” *Statecraft and Security: The Cold War and Beyond*, 1998, 179.

¹²⁵ Resnick and Van de Walle, “Introduction: Why Aid and Democracy? Why Africa,”

because the focus of political authority was not to the people but to the external financiers of democratization and development programmes. Moyo, for instance, shows convincingly that aid programmes like the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) rather undermined democracy and the mass basis of the rule of law in Africa.¹²⁶ Such programmes undermined democracy through their insistence on accounting to donor bodies rather than the people affected by the assistance programmes.

Concerns with democracy expansion did not mean the U.S. doled out money to nations that organized elections and held presidential inaugural events. Rather aid came in many forms such as food aid, military aid, and facilitation of programmes for capacity building normally led by American for-profit agencies. Some assistance aimed to help better the agricultural and nutritional needs of recipients. These included equipment for large scale farm mechanization. These kinds of support helped many governments in the developing world tackle famine in places like Ethiopia. The democratic shift in many countries also compelled African leaders to expend aid resources on larger political coalitions to remain politically relevant in places like Ghana where the SAP initiative reached every nook and cranny of the country. That spread of the gains of aid is in line with Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith's contention that democracy impels leaders to spread state resources for the benefit of more people in order to win political power.¹²⁷

Following the widespread developing world demand for democracy, U.S. administration officials broadened the scope of aid to include, among other things, "seed money and technical advice to build the institutions of democracy and capitalism. They

¹²⁶ Moyo, *Dead Aid*.

¹²⁷ Bruce Bueno De Mesquita and Alastair Smith, "Foreign Aid and Policy Concessions," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, no. 2 (2007): 251–84.

(*recipient states*) need to learn how to organize political parties and parliaments and a free press.”¹²⁸ Similarly, U.S. private think tanks such as the NDI and IRI supported pro-democracy aid campaigns from the mid-1980s in the developing world.

The end of Cold War hostilities raised the question of whether U.S. influence would facilitate democratic growth and consolidation in Africa as much as in Eastern Europe. Many, such as journalist Michael Clough, argued that “with the end of East-West competition, the world has changed in ways that will make it possible for democracy to succeed in South Africa and in the rest of Africa.”¹²⁹ As it turned out, those expectations were not unfounded because many countries in Africa quickly initiated political reform programs. In 1988, Ghana launched its decentralization process, a prelude to full scale democratization after about a decade under military rule. Elections were held in December 1992 and a new government was sworn into office in January 1993. This embrace of democracy, marked by elections, was felt in other countries such as Senegal in 1993, Ivory Coast in 1990 and 1995, Cameroon in 1992, and Malawi in 1994.¹³⁰ Some of these elections were not entirely free or fair. In certain instances, election outcomes were reversed as happened in Nigeria in 1993 because the results were unfavourable to the incumbent military government. After the military organized elections won by a prominent opposition figure, Chief Mashood K.O Abiola, the military leadership

¹²⁸ John M. Goshko, “Old Allocation, New Order Hard to Reconcile: Out of Step,” *Washington Post*, May 17, 1990.

¹²⁹ Michael Clough, “Africa Finds Reasons to Hope for Democracy’s Future,” *New York Times*, March 22, 1992. The story of South Africa, it was hoped, would change because the U.S. would have no strategic reason to prop up the Apartheid regime with whom relations were tense.

¹³⁰ “African Elections Database,” accessed March 6, 2019, <http://africanelections.tripod.com/index.html>.

annulled the results and arrested the winner.¹³¹ It would take another six years for that country to try another democratic transition.

Democratic drawbacks in places like Nigeria dimmed hopes of many progressive Africans about the entrenchment of the rule of law on the continent. Optimism was further dampened among Western observers that the growing indifference of the West jeopardized Africa's democratic switch at the end of the Cold War.¹³² The perceived American neglect of Africa was the result of greater emphasis in Washington on helping Eastern European democracies. While the U.S. supported Eastern Europe, the African share of American assistance shrunk. That those reductions took place in an era of promising political change in Africa displeased many watchers of U.S. Africa policy and bolsters Schraeder's argument that U.S. policy towards Africa was inconsistent throughout the Twentieth century.¹³³ For example, notwithstanding Botswana's sustained credentials as a democratic state, U.S. assistance to that country was paltry after 1995. Not until 2003 did Botswana regain favour in Washington's aid disbursement. In contrast, Ethiopia enjoyed weighty financial assistance from the U.S. throughout the 1990s, despite its struggles with democratic transition. Keith Griffins explains this disparity in the fact that Cold War and early post-Cold War assistance were more political than economic.¹³⁴ Given Ethiopia's geopolitical significance for U.S. military power in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, American conditions for aid were less insistent on democratic reforms compared to less strategically valuable countries. A

¹³¹ Chris W Ogbondah, "Political Repression in Nigeria, 1993-1998: A Critical Examination of One Aspect of the Perils of Military Dictatorship," *Africa Spectrum* 35, no. 2 (2000): 231-42.

¹³² Howard W. French, "African Democracies Worry Aid Will Evaporate: African Democracies Worry Aid Will Dry Up," *New York Times*, March 19, 1995.

¹³³ Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy toward Africa: Incrementalism, Crisis and Change*.

¹³⁴ Keith Griffin, "Foreign Aid after the Cold War," *Development and Change* 22, no. 4 (October 1, 1991): 645-85, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.1991.tb00430.x>.

disconnect thus existed between the firming of democracy promotion in Washington and actual financial incentivization from the U.S. for countries such as Ghana, Botswana, and Benin working to achieve democratic cultures and systems. As one African pundit put it, “the values so long preached by the West were being realized in fact, and many...naively thought that the West would have shown patience in nurturing democratic movement.”¹³⁵

Democracy promotion went through an evolutionary process beginning in the last decade of the Cold War. Realist political thinking shaped much of the policy from Reagan to Clinton. The White House, the State Department and Congress contributed in acknowledging and fastening democracy promotion to broader U.S. post-Cold War foreign policy. But it was the end of the Cold War that provided ample opportunity and ability for the U.S. to pursue, preach and demand democratic change around the world in return for food, military, and other forms of assistance. The allocation of assistance to other countries was done to supposedly further the expansion of a democratic world community, assure U.S. leadership of a freer world, and create a more peaceful post-Cold War global environment. The consensus of both Democrat and Republican law makers and presidents to consistently support a single line of policy demonstrates that democracy promotion was a bipartisan and truly national policy.

As has been shown in this chapter, much of the discourse that led to the rise in prominence of democracy promotion in U.S. policy in the 1980s and early 1990s emerged from policymakers in Washington. The source of their inspiration, though multifaceted, stemmed largely from the American democracy and political experience as well as the context of the Cold War. This echoes Hunt’s position that the concretization

¹³⁵ French, “African Democracies Worry Aid Will Evaporate: African Democracies Worry Aid Will Dry Up.”

of democracy in U.S. foreign policy emerged from shared values and ideology held by the American elites and the public. The constant theme of American democratic export in speeches and comments further highlights the continued belief in American exceptionalism which supports Stewart's assertion that the claim to exceptionalism drove U.S. foreign policy making. Foreign policy, particularly, the promotion of political ideologies abroad, was built on the shared national values, beliefs, experiences and history of the country. African countries such as Benin, Nigeria, and Botswana, while making strides at democratic consolidation, received varying levels of U.S. assistance which in many instances contradicted the new, emerging consensus at home in the U.S. over the promotion of democracy in foreign policy.

Though the U.S. couched its democracy as the standard ideal for universal adoption, target states did not always construe democracy in such terms. In the next chapter, I use empirical evidence to examine whether U.S. foreign assistance programmes reinforced or rewarded democratic reforms in developing countries in Africa. Using foreign aid and trade data from the USAID and the U.S. Census Office respectively, the chapter examines how Ghana, Zambia, Benin and Botswana's share of U.S. assistance was informed by their press freedom performance and elections records.

CHAPTER 2

U.S. AID AND DEMOCRATIZATION, 1990-2001

“We can help ourselves by helping the best African leaders demonstrate to their people that the benefits of democracy are not theoretical, but tangible.” Madeleine Albright, U.S. Secretary of State, 1999.¹³⁶

Scholars such as Tijen Demirel-Pegg and James Moskowitz suggest that U.S. foreign policy after 1990 reinforced the use of aid to endorse democratic state building around the world.¹³⁷ Those endorsements motivated some dictators such as Blaise Campaore of Burkina Faso, Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, and Paul Biya of Cameroun to hold elections in their countries either to gain global political credibility or necessitate genuine democratic reforms. This chapter discusses the Ghanaian experience of U.S. aid within the context of its democratizing initiatives. By comparing Ghanaian press freedom scores to its aid receipts from Washington, this chapter explains how aid correlated to democratic progress in ways that furthered the rule of law or otherwise. To deepen the explanatory power of the analysis, we add three other countries, Botswana, Zambia and Benin, to provide a layer of comparison through which to fully understand the processes and ambiguities of post-Cold War American aid programmes in Africa. This approach improves our ability to effectively analyze the politics of aid and democratization and

¹³⁶ Curled From BBC, “Approve African Growth Act-Albright,” *Daily Graphic*, October 27, 1999, 1.

¹³⁷ Tijen Demirel-Pegg and James Moskowitz, “US Aid Allocation: The Nexus of Human Rights, Democracy, and Development,” *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 2 (2009): 181–98. Demirel-Pegg and Moskowitz argue that American aid was used as a conduit to influence countries to better their human rights and rule of law performance. Similarly, Bernhard Reinsberg argues that aid givers, particularly bilateral aid donors, rewarded regime change and democratic transition in recipient states after the Cold War. See Bernhard Reinsberg, “Foreign Aid Responses to Political Liberalization,” *World Development*, Political Conditionality and EU Foreign Aid, 75 (November 1, 2015): 46–61, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.11.006>.

deepen our knowledge of the ways in which aid either reinforced democratic trends or betrayed American rhetoric of democracy promotion in the post-Cold War period.

2.1. Aid for Democracy in U.S. Africa Policy: Some Post-Cold War Evidence

In 1993, leading Ghanaian minds like media practitioner Nana Essilfie Conduah claimed that any American support for Ghana's democracy was because of the "switch from the British Prime Ministerial inheritance to a hybrid of American Executive Presidency."¹³⁸ But such observations failed to acknowledge that at the time of Ghana's Fourth Republican transition, there was minimal assistance from the U.S. towards the whole exercise. Indeed, it took U.S. ambassador to Ghana, Kenneth Brown's persistence for the USAID to send a team to Ghana to assess the ground for some form of democracy assistance in 1992.¹³⁹ This does not mean overall American assistance ceased. Rather, specific U.S. foreign aid allocations for democracy activities and advancing the rule of law were not as pronounced as Conduah and others thought.

When Washington eventually decided to send in democracy assistance to Ghana, American initiatives focused on helping create resilient state institutions that could act independently. That is why the first major U.S. support for Ghana's democracy in the post-Cold War period went to the Ghanaian parliament in 1993. To strengthen parliamentary governance, the American government sponsored a familiarization tour of Washington for select Ghanaian lawmakers in August that year. The tour gave the Ghanaian lawmakers an opportunity to observe "how the legislative system operates at

¹³⁸ Nana Essilfie Conduah, "Democracy...with a Little Help from a Friend," *The People's Daily Graphic*, June 4, 1993.

¹³⁹ Edward R. McMahon and Thomas A. P. Sinclair, *Democratic Institution Performance: Research and Policy Perspectives* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2002), 198.

the state and local levels” as part of learning the ropes of legislative work.¹⁴⁰ The leader of the Ghanaian delegation was Mohammed Ibn Chambas, first deputy speaker of the house. Other members were Owusu Agyeman, minority leader, Gladys Boateng, member for Tema West, Steve Akorli, member for Ho East, and Hawa Yakubu Ogede, member for Bawku East. The members’ experience of the Congressional process informed their future legislative success. Some of them, like Hawa Yakubu Ogede, became prominent activists for the opposition in the Ghanaian parliament as well as key voices for women activism outside parliament. Ibn Chambas left parliament in 2002 as one of the experienced minds who helped put the young Ghanaian democracy on a strong footing. The experience he gained was later put to wide use at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) where he championed economic cooperation and political stability in the West Africa sub-region from 2002 to 2006.

Collaborations like the 1993 tour enabled the Ghanaian parliament to gain understandings of the American style of institutional democracy in addition to the Ghanaian experience of parliamentary democracy to firm the practice of the rule of law. That combination of systems of knowledge both local and foreign resulted in Ghana’s infant democracy withstanding the shocks such as intense opposition dissatisfaction, trade union demands, and the struggle over electoral reforms. Politicians aside, journalists and opposition activists in Accra gained relevant knowledge from strategy conferences with others around the continent. The International Republican Institute, for instance, organized a major continental democracy conference in Gaboronne, Gabon on February 2, 1993 to promote mostly right-wing political strategies and activities across the

¹⁴⁰ GNA, “Parliamentary Delegation Leaves for United States,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, August 9, 1993.

continent.¹⁴¹ At the gathering was Ghanaian media practitioner Asare-Donkoh. The IRI's presence in Africa demonstrates American commitment to export distinctively U.S. ideologies to supposedly fertile, new frontiers open to the advancement of the rule of law. The IRI's work aimed at teaching African actors what partisanship meant within U.S. political contexts with the expectation that participants would adopt such approaches to party and consensus building at home. Similarly, the NDI had their own foreign policy agenda in promoting liberal, left leaning democratic forces and activities in Africa.

Furthering support for institutional growth in Ghana, the U.S. National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) funded the training of senior parliamentary staff to increase their capacity for legislative analysis, administration, procedure, and management.¹⁴² Aptly captioned, "Parliamentary Staff and Institutional Development," this October 1993 workshop came under the auspices of the United States Information Service (USIS), one of the agencies that promoted U.S cultural presence around the world. Such political sponsorship, limited as it was, supports Fareed Zakaria's assertion that American backing of democracy elsewhere stems from convictions at home about the "the appeal of their culture and ideas," to the rest of the world.¹⁴³

It was in October 1994 that the most significant democracy assistance ever from Washington to Accra was launched.¹⁴⁴ This Ghana-U.S. agreement was a multi-million dollar funding programme spread over four years to strengthen "broad participation in

¹⁴¹ Asare-Donkoh, "Democracy and Human Rights."

¹⁴² Debrah Fynn, "Workshop for Senior Parliamentary Staff," *Daily Graphic*, October 4, 1994.

¹⁴³ Fareed Zakaria, "The Future of American Power - How America Can Survive the Rise of the Rest," *Foreign Affairs* 87 (2008): 18-43.

¹⁴⁴ GNA, "Ghana-United States Agreement...To Assist Electoral Process," *Daily Graphic*, October 26, 1994.

free, fair and transparent elections in Ghana's elections scheduled for 1996."¹⁴⁵ The overall amount was \$10, 150,000, subject to the availability of USAID funds for the purpose. Major areas of focus included "voter education, preparation of a new voter registry and voter identification, institutional strengthening of the Electoral Commission, training and orienting voting observers, and providing other electoral support."¹⁴⁶ The allocated capital was channeled directly to institutions of democratic governance, in this case the Ghanaian Electoral Commission. A major driving force behind the financial package was Ambassador Kenneth Brown who previously pressed Washington for assistance for "firm support for democratic transition...over the objections of the USAID."¹⁴⁷ As a result, a team of assessors was sent to Ghana from Washington to study the possibility of extending some form of help. After the study, USAID pulled together funding from a variety of sources to support the electoral process among participants in Ghana. The main reason for the funding was the belief, later espoused by Madeline Albright, Secretary of State, that "there is no question that we can help ourselves by helping the best African leaders demonstrate to their people that the benefits of democracy are not theoretical, but tangible."¹⁴⁸

Around the same time, in the mid-1990s, Washington committed a bigger budget, about \$85 million, to prop up democratic transition across Africa.¹⁴⁹ This package was part of \$1.2 billion of overall foreign assistance to African countries. However, the meagre commitment of \$85 million to democracy in a \$1.2 billion overall aid package confirmed continued U.S. commitment to development over democracy assistance

¹⁴⁵ GNA, "Ghana-United States Agreement...To Assist Electoral Process."

¹⁴⁶ GNA, Ghana-United States Agreement...To Assist Electoral Process.

¹⁴⁷ McMahon and Sinclair, *Democratic Institution Performance*.

¹⁴⁸ Curled From BBC, "Approve African Growth Act-Albright."

¹⁴⁹ GNA, "U.S. Seeks Responsible Partners," *Daily Graphic*, March 30, 1994.

programmes. This emphasis on development did not help advance Albright's goal of using aid to help democracy in African countries. The failure was in stark contrast to the wave of democratization which was taking place across the continent. That is why Kenneth Jost observed that there was a disconnect between rhetoric and actuality in the U.S. policy of democratization in Africa.¹⁵⁰ Indeed, the Republican controlled House sought to revise the \$1.2 billion funding for Africa in the mid-1990s downward despite the fact that this allocation to Africa was less compared to other regions receiving American assistance.

Though the 1994 U.S. democracy aid to Ghana was encouraging, it was by no means the only form of financial support for the electoral process in Ghana. The final Ghana-U.S. agreement acknowledged that "based on experience...the USAID expects the government of Switzerland, Great Britain, Canada, Germany, France, and the European Union to provide assistance in various forms" over the course of preparations towards the 1996 elections.¹⁵¹ In fact, Washington estimated that \$1.9 million would be contributed by the Danish Development Agency (DANIDA) alone. This American recognition of other aid contributors to democracy showed the U.S. valued a multifaceted approach to democracy support and that the Americans alone could not establish nor entrench democratization on the continent.

Another non-American contributor to the electoral process in Ghana during this time was the German Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FEF). So prominent was the FEF that its presence in the country generated mixed reactions from different sections of political

¹⁵⁰ Kenneth Jost, "Is Democracy Taking Root in Sub-Saharan Africa?," *CQ Researcher* 5, no. 11 (March 24, 1995).

¹⁵¹ GNA, "Ghana-United States Agreement...To Assist Electoral Process (III)," *Daily Graphic*, October 29, 1994.

society. Yaw Ayebofoh captured the varied responses to the FEF when he recalled that in the pre-transition era the FEF had been “detested like a vermin. But it has been one of the most consistent funding agencies for the operations of the Interim Electoral Commission- a legacy bequeathed to the Electoral Commission.”¹⁵² The FEF held numerous capacity building programs in the post-transition years to deepen the participation of voters and better the managerial and political skills of independent electoral institutions and politicians. For example, it funded the compilation of the book, *Making Democracy Work in the Fourth Republic*, in 1994.¹⁵³ Earlier, in June 1993, a seminar under the same title had been sponsored by the Foundation at which speakers addressed the subject of democracy through papers which became the substance of the new book. The Foundation also organized a workshop on “Institutional Linkages and Enhanced Democracy” at Akosombo from July 7-9, 1994 to discuss issues on democratic consolidation.¹⁵⁴ There were many other programs the Foundation paid for or carried out on its own to expand the boundaries of democratic culture in Ghana. The FEF’s activities in democracy activism were successful in that a core of Ghana’s civic activists benefitted from its empowerment programmes.

While the Americans and some Europeans contributed to democratic institutional growth in Ghana, the Canadian government added its own support through offering to provide short tours of its parliamentary institutions to Ghanaian MPs to enhance their law-making capacity.¹⁵⁵ Britain equally extended help by inviting speaker of parliament Justice Daniel F. Annan to Westminster in late October 1994. Ghana’s British Council

¹⁵² Yaw Boadu Ayebofoh, “Democracy Will Triumph,” *Daily Graphic*, January 28, 1994.

¹⁵³ Kwabena Ofosehene, “Let’s Use Traditional Values to Sustain Democracy-Annan,” *Daily Graphic*, June 30, 1994.

¹⁵⁴ Asare-Donkoh, “Democracy and Human Rights.”

¹⁵⁵ Nana Essilfie Conduah, “Press Coverage of Parliament,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, March 8, 1993.

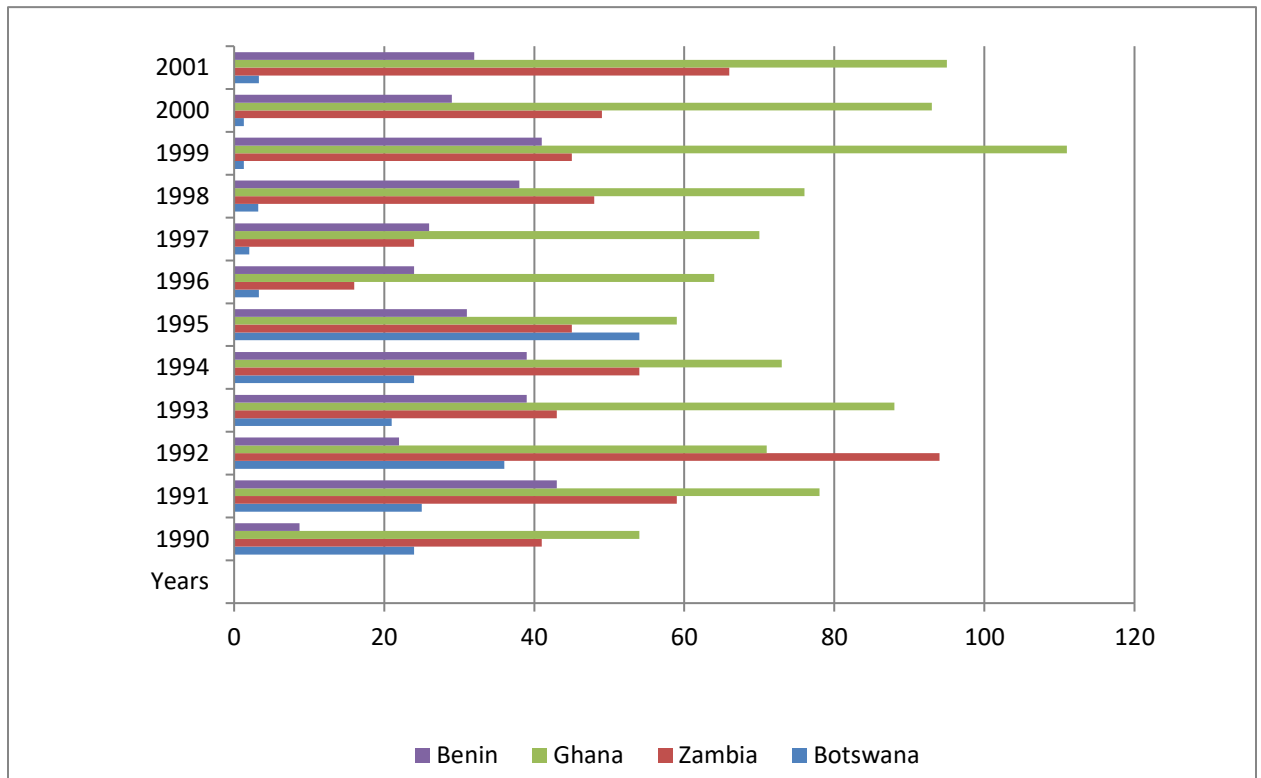
preceded this with a training workshop for 32 Ghanaian journalists from both the private and public media with funding from the Thomson Foundation in the UK. These efforts from numerous countries reinforced the broad nature of encouragement that was invested in Ghana's democratic transition. Though the 1994 contribution from Washington of over \$10 million provided much needed financial cover for electoral and political institutions, other aid partners made some contributions to democracy promotion in Ghana. More importantly, these foreign donor programmes were by no means the main boosters of democracy in Ghana. The mass of financial commitment and human investment in Ghana's democratization process came from the government of Ghana and the Ghanaian voters, civil society groups, and the clergy. As William Plaff suggest, "civil society makes democracy possible. Without it, democracy has failed and will continue to fail in Africa."¹⁵⁶

In the chart below (Figure 1), data on the full U.S. assistance to Ghana, Zambia, Botswana and Benin are captured from 1990 to 2001. Next, there is another chart (Figure 2) on press freedom scores for those countries. Comparing data in both charts, helps us understand how much aid was informed by press freedom performance in order to explain how the United States used its financial power to encourage democratizing countries to stay on course.

¹⁵⁶ William Plaff, "A New Colonialism? Europe Must Go Back into Africa," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1995, 2-6.

Figure 2.1

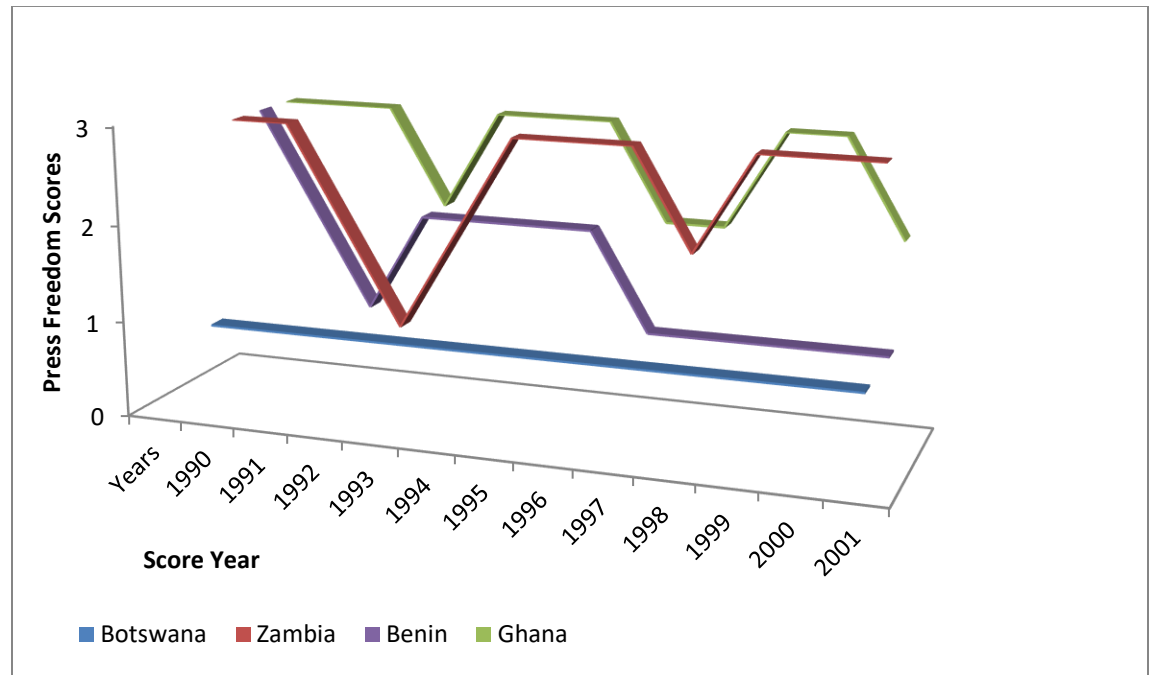
U.S. Aid Values for Ghana, Benin, Zambia, and Botswana from 1990-2001



Courtesy: USAID's Trend Data Site, 2018. Figures represent absolute million values of all assistance programmes.

Figure 2.2

Press Freedom Scores for Ghana, Benin, Zambia and Botswana



Courtesy: Freedom House, 2019. (1=Free; 2=Partly Free; 3=Not Free).

As can be seen from the figures, U.S aid for Ghana was high compared to its press freedom scores as a measure of its commitment to the rule of law in the 1990s. The Ghanaian media, still contending with perceived limitations from the military era, was yet to reach its full potential. Though journalists in Ghana were not dragged out and summarily executed, the spread of the private press, while developed, rarely came close to matching the effective dominance of the public press over coverage in the country. This was largely the result of the funding gap between state media and the private press. Until 1994, the broadcast media in Ghana remained restricted with no access for private citizens to acquire frequency modulation spaces for broadcasting.¹⁵⁷ Despite these media

¹⁵⁷ Amin Alhassan, "Market Valorization in Broadcasting Policy in Ghana: Abandoning the Quest for Media Democratization," *Media, Culture & Society* 27, no. 2 (2005): 211–28.

restrictions, Ghana gained far more aid from Washington than Botswana. Botswana, on the other hand, performed consistently higher on the ranking in press freedom and held elections that returned a popular ruling party back to power. Yet, early post-Cold War U.S. assistance to Botswana, though better than mid-1990s to 2001, did not confirm the narrative that American support favoured states with credible democratic practices. Explaining the numbers for the early post-Cold War for Botswana, Jeff Gow calls attention to the fact that Botswana's high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate of 35% encouraged external donors to pay more attention to this health epidemic than the less pressing issue of democracy.¹⁵⁸ That attention to a national health challenge took much of the shine away from other equally pressing democracy programmes. But granted this, American aid, democracy and development related from the USAID, was never encouraging for Botswana from 1996 to 2001. The Republican Congress' tendency to cut down assistance programmes to Africa also meant cuts for small countries like Botswana.¹⁵⁹ From 1996 to 2001, Botswana never received above \$5 million of U.S. aid per annum. In total, Washington shipped \$14.4 million of aid to Botswana from 1996 to 2001. In the same period, Zambia received \$248 million, Ghana \$509 million, and Benin \$190 million. But as can be seen from the Figure 2, Botswana outperformed these countries as a democracy in guaranteeing the freedom of expression. Nonetheless, it received far less support compared to these other states.

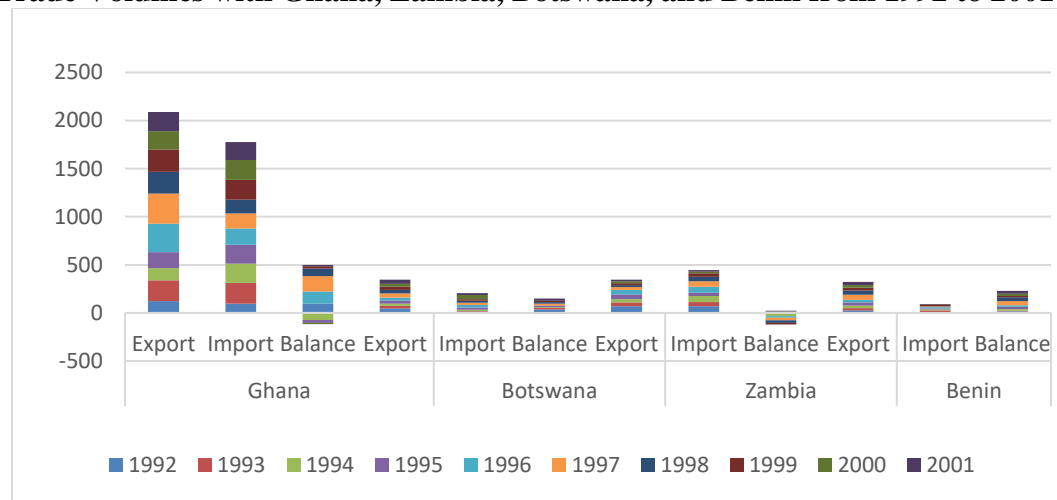
¹⁵⁸ Jeff Gow, "The HIV/AIDS Epidemic In Africa: Implications For U.S. Policy," *Health Affairs* 21, no. 3 (May 1, 2002): 57–69, <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.21.3.57>.

¹⁵⁹ Steven Radelet, "A Primer on Foreign Aid," *Available at SSRN 983122*, 2006. Radelet thinks that country size matters in U.S. aid allocations around the world. The Botswana experience seems to buttress this view. For details on Congress' aid cutting intentions, see Jost, "Is Democracy Taking Root in Sub-Saharan Africa?"

One explanation for the aid disparity is trade volumes the countries recorded with the U.S. from 1992 to 2001 as presented in Figure 3. Botswana performed far behind Ghana and Zambia in trading volumes with the United States. It posted higher volumes than Benin. However, Benin fared better in attracting U.S. aid in the last half of the 1990s. One plausible reason is that the American-French jostle for influence in Francophone Africa created favourable conditions for Benin's improved aid gains. Aside that, Ghana and Zambia's share of assistance point to an interplay of larger U.S. economic interest in those states because of their positive trade relations with the United States.

Figure 2.3

U.S. Trade Volumes with Ghana, Zambia, Botswana, and Benin from 1992 to 2001



Courtesy: U.S. Census Office, 2019. <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/index.html>

The effect of trade relations on U.S. assistance and security programmes is not surprising since economists like Rostow suggested that commercial interest must guide

Washington's policy in the post-Cold War era in order to sustain prosperity at home.¹⁶⁰ Despite the American propensity to emphasize security and commercial ties over democracy, the Ghanaian state continued to evolve its media and polity, building stronger institutions and allowing for better public engagement in furtherance of the rule of law. It was this that led the Rawlings administration to liberalize the airwaves for media practice in 1994.¹⁶¹ It was not until 1997, however, that media liberalization went full steam across the country. The slow, measured nature of media liberalization came about because the ruling Ghanaian elites consciously guided the pace and form of that liberalization.

Zambia followed Ghana closely in holding an unenviable record of cautious press liberalization implementation. Yet, Zambia, like Ghana, managed to attract sizeable amounts of American assistance.¹⁶² Even Benin, a comparatively smaller country with emerging free institutions, registered aid amounts that outweighed Botswana's assistance figures in the last half of a decade. In a larger sense, the disconnect between Washington's professed democracy promotion and foreign aid gets clearer when Nigeria is examined. Until the 1999 elections, Nigeria represented a test case of worsening political leadership in Africa. But immediately after the 1999 elections, Albright, U.S. Secretary of State, assured Olusegun Obasanjo, the Nigerian president, that the U.S. would increase aid to "assist Nigeria to transform into a democracy...The increase from \$27m, would make Nigeria the largest recipient of U.S aid in Africa."¹⁶³ At the same

¹⁶⁰ Schmergel, *U.S. Foreign Policy in the 1990s*.

¹⁶¹ Alhassan, "Market Valorization in Broadcasting Policy in Ghana: Abandoning the Quest for Media Democratization."

¹⁶² See U.S. aid numbers in figure 3.

¹⁶³ Curled From BBC, "Nigeria Promised More U.S Financial Support," *Daily Graphic*, October 21, 1999.

time, Botswana, probably the best example of a free, democratic state, fared poorly in its ability to attract U.S. aid.

Though U.S. foreign assistance helped, to some extent, expand the boundaries of the rule of law in Africa, the allocations were not always used to laud the most vigorous democratizing states like Botswana. This disconnect between professed policy and execution contradicted the American convictions in its democratic leadership. As Obed Asamoah explained in 1995, this was “unfortunate because Africa has found expression in the establishment of constitutional rule in country after country” at a time when “expected volume of assistance has never been forthcoming.”¹⁶⁴ Comparing Ghana to Benin, Botswana and Zambia bolsters the notion that assistance was not necessarily used to establish and entrench the rule of law in democratizing, developing states. Given Ghana’s abysmal press freedom record relative to other states like Botswana, a logical outcome would have been for it to have receive lesser assistance. The improving press freedom in neighboring Benin, particularly after 1996, would have ideally led to increased grants. On the contrary, Ghanaian receipts almost always doubled Benin’s annual figures in that period while equally outstripping Botswana’s. Although trade relations have been explained as a plausible factor for Ghana’s experience, another motivation was the country’s faithful commitment to implementing economic reforms under the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP). The admiration Washington had for Ghana may have further accounted for Accra’s positive aid relationship with the U.S. in the 1990s.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ GNA, “Asamoah Asks for More Help for Africa,” *Daily Graphic*, October 12, 1995.

¹⁶⁵ Harold Alderman, “Ghana: Adjustment’s Star Pupil,” *Adjusting to Policy Failure in African Economies*, 1994, 23–52; Eboe Hutchful, “Why Regimes Adjust: The World Bank Ponders Its ‘Star Pupil,’” *Canadian Journal of African Studies/La Revue Canadienne Des Études Africaines* 29, no. 2 (1995): 303–17.

The table below provides information on the election history of the four countries used for comparison in this chapter.

Table 2.1

A Table Detailing Post-Cold War Elections in Ghana, Benin, Zambia and Botswana

Country	Number of Elections	Regime Change	Years of Elections
Benin	5	1	1991, 1995, 1996, 2001
Botswana	3	0	1989, 1994, 1999
Ghana	3	1	1992, 1996, 2000
Zambia	3	1	1991, 1996, 2001

Courtesy: African Elections Database, 2018.

Benin held a referendum on constitutional changes on December 2, 1990. This was followed by national assembly elections on February 17, 1991 and presidential elections in March 1991. The 1995 and 1999 polls were national assembly elections that sent representatives to the national assembly. In 1996 and 2001 presidential elections were held. Nicephore Soglo lost the presidency to Mathieu Kerekou in Benin in the 1996 presidential elections. Benin continued to practice this parliamentary system of electoral democracy beyond 2001. In Ghana, the 2000 election was won by the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) with a coalition of other smaller parties.¹⁶⁶ The ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) in Zambia changed leadership in the 2001 elections and won the election that year. Except Botswana, all three countries experienced regime change between 1990 and 2001.

These regime changes helped normalize the transfer of political power without violence. But, as has been noted, the continuous progress some African states made in implementing the spirit and letter of the rule of law did not necessarily translate into

¹⁶⁶ New Patriotic Party was Ghana's main opposition party in the 1990s. It came into power in 2001 on the back of a campaign promising change after nearly twenty years of John Rawlings.

favourable U.S. economic assistance. For instance, despite Albright's plea to the U.S. Congress to "give an important hand up to African leaders who have been reforming and modernizing their economies and give new reasons for others to do the same," Capitol Hill took more than a decade to finally pass the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) on May 18, 2000.¹⁶⁷ This act extended duty free access to the U.S. market for African textile producers to increase trade volumes between the U.S. and Africa.¹⁶⁸ Though the AGOA benefitted both U.S. and African economies, the slow pace of its development echoed perceptions that Congress had African concerns on the back burner. Indeed, these perceptions of neglect led Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way to conclude that the United States deliberately exerted effort at promoting democratization in Central Europe and the Americas rather than in Africa and the former USSR states in the post-Cold War period.¹⁶⁹

2.2. The Ghanaian Reaction to the Politics of Assistance

As the main contributor to the democratization process, the Ghanaian government retained control over the electoral process and its financing. Ghanaian decision makers responded to U.S. aid as well as other donor support for democratic governance in two ways. Firstly, Ghanaian institutional recipients often commended the donors for their help while collaborating to account for the expenditure of allocated capital. Secondly, leaders aimed to limit donor presence and intrusion into the work of their institutions.

A highly debated programme of support was the 1994 USAID assistance of approximately \$10 million of direct funding for Ghana's electoral reforms prior to the

¹⁶⁷ Curled From BBC, "Approve African Growth Act-Albright."

¹⁶⁸ "About AGOA - Agoa.Info - African Growth and Opportunity Act," accessed April 26, 2019, <https://agoa.info/about-agoa.html>.

¹⁶⁹ Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, "International Linkage and Democratization," *Journal of Democracy* 16, no. 3 (2005): 20–34.

1996 general elections. In providing this assistance, the American embassy passed the money through U.S non-governmental bodies to undertake most of the activities planned as part of the package. Vehement opposition to USAID's approach came from the Ghanaian government. Government spokespersons like Tony Aidoo insisted that "USAID...cannot be allowed to drive the...proposal for electoral changes" because elections were matters of sovereignty which no external bodies should interfere with.¹⁷⁰ The government thus signaled its unpreparedness to abdicate responsibility for leading and managing the process of electoral reforms to donor agencies. Aidoo wanted the Electoral Commission to manage and disburse a \$741, 000 component of the fund to training party agents at polling stations despite the USAID's preference for an American company to undertake the training exercise.¹⁷¹ Aidoo hoped that managerial and administrative control through the Electoral Commission would "eliminate the expenditure of a large part of the funding in the high fees that would be payable to US-based NGOs."¹⁷² The Ghanaians hoped that local civil society groups, governance institutions and statutory bodies would lead the process of democratic reform even if some funding for those endeavors came from outside institutions. The opposition to the awarding of contracts to mostly U.S. based NGOs became so hotly contested that Ekow Spio-Garbrah, Ghanaian ambassador to the U.S., did not shy from raising objections to such aid conditionalities in a May 1996 speech at Capitol Hill.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Tony Aidoo, "The Search for Free and Fair Elections," *Daily Graphic*, August 1, 1994. Tony Aidoo was a key figure in the government of J.J. Rawlings. He was one of the mouthpieces through whom the administration tested public opinion on some issues. Educated, vocal and firm, Aidoo often took on political opponents of the administration and defended official government positions on many national issues.

¹⁷¹ Aidoo, "The Search for Free and Fair Elections."

¹⁷² Aidoo, "The Search for Free and Fair Elections."

¹⁷³ Ekow Spio-Garbrah, "New Priorities for US-Africa Relations," *Daily Graphic*, June 21, 1996.

Ghanaian recipient institutions of U.S. aid also exhibited resistance to donor intrusion into their managerial space. Many heads of local statutory bodies saw aid as stifling their ability to function independently of donors dictates. In 1994, a key head of the Electoral Commission of Ghana came out to publicly reiterate the independence of the institution in the face of perceived pressures from the USAID following the allocation of funds to the commission for electoral reforms.¹⁷⁴ This reminder from the Electoral Commission revealed the complex impact of aid on the institution's autonomy. The complication arose from the USAID's insistence on a parallel expenditure scheme for aid money. Given the quality of its human resources, the elections management pedigree it garnered from 1988 onwards, and its national reach, the Ghanaian Electoral Commission's confidence in its own abilities were not misplaced. The commission also felt that opposition parties were pressing it in ways that denied it some measure of autonomy in carrying out its functions. In insisting on its independence, the Ghanaian EC's indicated that any talks with aid givers and political parties were not binding on the commission. The Commission thus grew distrustful and uncomfortable with the means through which foreign assistance programmes were transmitted to it as well as attempts by donors to set the managerial agenda for the commission.

Apart from the problems with foreign assistance for political organizations, Ghanaian citizens like R.B.W Hesse, a media commentator, challenged popular western perceptions that Africa received voluminous and generous assistance packages. When contrasted with trade losses African states went through, foreign assistance packages paled in relevance, according to Hesse.¹⁷⁵ He also decried unfair trade relations with the

¹⁷⁴ Graphic Reporter, "Electoral Commission Is Independent-Says Afreh," *Daily Graphic*, August 9, 1994.

¹⁷⁵ R.B.W. Hesse, "Does Africa Receive Enough Aid?" *Daily Graphic*, March 28, 1994.

West which he argued were more detrimental to the economic rise of the continent than was acknowledged. Hesse thus called for a policy shift that put fairer trade terms with the U.S. on the table in international relations. He explained that “Africa’s plea is for trade not aid.”¹⁷⁶ Yet, this plea did not seem to have an effect since aid continued to dominate U.S.-Ghana economic and political relations.

The evidence presented in this chapter demonstrates that Washington’s aid programme was not in sync with its professed commitment to advancing democracy abroad. On the contrary, trade and other factors dominated the nature and form of U.S. aid allocation in ways that undermine the perspective of the current literature that the U.S. led in promoting democracy in developing countries after the Cold War. As the evidence shows, relatively large aid recipients like Ghana did not live up to the same democratic ideals as countries like Botswana which received lesser assistance. Washington’s aid choices focused on reinforcing its economic ties with recipient countries and gaining strategic advantages in Francophone Africa. Economic and strategic political considerations thus took precedence over the Americans’ stated goal of promoting democracy on the continent.

There was also deep ambivalence towards foreign assistance in Ghana in the 1990s. Ghanaians raised concerns about whether donors’ support was aimed at genuinely enhancing democratic growth or furthering donors’ own ends. Ghanaian leaders did not allow aid to undermine their ability to continue to guide the process of political and democratic governance. Leaders such as those at the Ghanaian Electoral Commission, politicians, and concerned citizens recognized that it was the Ghanaian people themselves who must be responsible for the control of the politics of the state and that no amount of

¹⁷⁶ Hesse, “Does Africa Receive Enough Aid?” *Daily Graphic*.

external assistance should warrant an abdication of that role to non-Ghanaian entities irrespective of the form and quantity of financial assistance injected into Ghana's democratic cause. In the next chapter, I explore Ghana's internal politics and the way Ghanaians construed democracy and external influence in its transition as a democracy as well as the consolidation of its democracy.

CHAPTER 3

THE GHANAIAIAN TRANSITION TO DEMOCRATIZATION, 1988-1992

“No country can develop with only one person’s thought and without a real discussion.”

Adama Sangare, a patent medicine vendor at Bamako market in 1993.¹⁷⁷

This chapter explores the Ghanaian democratic experience in the post-Cold War global political environment emphasizing the localized nature of democracy promotion during the transition and how post-transition politics and society reflected a commitment within the country to make democracy work. Non-partisan actors, among them farmers, trade unionists, scholars, and professionals, pushed the frontiers of the new democratic experiment despite the seeming dominance of politicians who attempted to drown out the agency of the larger society. At a local level, citizens’ concern with democracy promotion was transactional because rural people expected that their efforts in establishing democracy would lead to improved social and economic wellbeing. Such dedication to democratic change demonstrates the importance of Ghanaian rather than foreign influences on democratization in Ghana. The local Ghanaian leadership of the democratic process, the widespread Ghanaian knowledge and appreciation of the rule of law, and the national mass involvement in the transition to democracy in Ghana undermine the American perspective that democratization was a replication of Western, specifically U.S. forms of institutions and processes.

¹⁷⁷ Howard W. French, “In One Poor African Nation, Democracy Thrives,” *New York Times*, October 16, 1993. Adama Sangare was a patent medicine vendor in Bamako interviewed by Howard W. French in the 1990s about the Malian democratic transition.

3.1. Ghana: A Brief Background

Ghanaian contact with the West began in 1492 when the small coastal community of Axim welcomed the first Portuguese sea trading ship. Afterwards, the Dutch, Danes, Prussians, and English settled and traded in the then Gold Coast, a name given the territory for its large deposits of gold. Though European merchants established permanent presences in castles and fortresses along the coast for both legitimate trade and the infamous slave trade, official governance relations did not emerge until 1844 when the resident leader of the company of merchants, George Maclean, signed a bond with a few coastal chiefs abdicating greater judicial power to the British courts on the coast.

In the 1850s, concrete steps were effected to legitimize that colonial relation with indigenous coastal Fante and Ga people. Like the United States during the revolutionary war, taxation became the first issue of contention between coastal Ghanaian communities and the English crown's attempt at exercising political suzerainty over the people. Until then, the shared coastal trading space between the English and the Dutch worked in locals' favour as they could play one Western power against another to sustain their autonomy. No European power could exercise concrete law making, taxation, and policy implementation power over the indigenes due to this inbuilt political mechanism local chiefs used to oppose European colonial attempt.

All this changed in 1852 when the other European powers left the Gold Coast selling off all their assets to the British. In that year, Governor Stephen Hill of the Cape Coast Castle held a meeting with local Fante chiefs where he suggested the idea of a poll tax. In later meetings with other chiefs in southeastern Ghana, Governor Hill convinced them to consent to the tax in order to raise about £20,000 (about £2,768,943.28 in 2019

value) to provide social amenities for towns and communities in the Gold Coast. Local dissatisfaction with misuse of the tax proceeds and the lack of effective representation of the masses killed the tax policy. Sensing growing European intrusion into local political and social spaces, the coastal Fante chiefs reacted. Chiefs in the Fante enclave formed a union, The Fante Confederation in 1868, to safeguard the autonomy of the coastal states. Made of up numerous native authorities, the Confederation had an executive council and legislative body elected by member native authorities. It was, however, short-lived due to internal power politics among chiefs and growing disinterest in its activities from some native authorities that had earlier joined. Nonetheless, it taught the people a semblance of indirect electoral democracy through its legislative council.

In later years, the British colonial authorities restricted indigenous representation on political institutions. Despite this, Gold Coast nationalism persisted in demanding increased representation of mass interest in local politics. Another important nationalist group during this classical stage of nationalism was the Aborigines Rights Protection Society (ARPS) formed in 1897. It opposed attempts at vesting unused Gold Coast lands in the British crown among others. Groups like the Fante Confederation and the Aborigines Rights Protection Society raised political awareness and mobilized in ways that deepened indigenous desires for freedom and direct political representation in the Gold Coast.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ For further details, see Francis Kwamina Buah, *A History of Ghana* (Macmillan, 1998); David Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism, 1850-1928* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963); Antony N. Allott, "Native Tribunals In The Gold Coast 1844—1927," *Journal of African Law* 1, no. 3 (1957): 163–71.

3.2. The Growth of Ghanaian Constitutional Government

Though agitations for representative democracy in Ghana date back to the nineteenth century, it was the Guggisberg Constitution that guaranteed some elected seats for towns in the colony in a new legislative council in 1925.¹⁷⁹ The Guggisberg Constitution also established town councils with members popularly elected. However, Guggisberg's constitutional work was promptly opposed by radical nationalists because it failed to grant full elective representation for communities and towns in the new national legislature.¹⁸⁰ In 1948, a new constitution promulgated by British Governor Allan Burns expanded unofficial Ghanaian representation on the legislative council. Nevertheless, mass agitation against that constitution compelled colonial authorities to draft a new one in 1951 which allowed for thirty-three members of the legislative assembly to be directly elected by the people. But local activists rejected this constitution since chiefs were given the power to appoint thirty-seven members. Thus, by 1957 when Ghana gained independence from Britain, the Ghanaian political story was dotted with practical experiences of political opposition, press activism, elections, and representative democracy that prepared much of the country for self-government.

Post-independent Ghana oscillated between democracy and military rule. After the 1966 military coup that ousted the democratic administration of Kwame Nkrumah, the conservative, Kwesi Abrefa Busia took over as Prime Minister. Within two years, Busia was overthrown by Colonel Ignatius Kutu Acheampong. The military junta of Acheampong and later Lieutenant General Fred Akuffo were ousted in a June 4th, 1979 coup led by Jerry John Rawlings, a junior army officer. Right after the putsch, the new

¹⁷⁹ Buah, *A History of Ghana*, 1998; Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana*, 1963; Allott, "Native Tribunals In The Gold Coast 1844—1927," *Journal of African Law* 1, no. 3 (1957): 163–71.

¹⁸⁰ Buah, "A History of Ghana."

Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) returned the country to civilian rule under the economist Dr. Hilla Limann in October 1979.¹⁸¹ On December 31, 1981, Rawlings returned to the scene in another coup citing a need to remedy the worsening economic conditions under the civilian government of Limann. For close to two decades, Rawlings defined Ghanaian politics and led, for the second time, a return to civilian rule in 1993.

3.3. The Mass Nature of Ghana's Fourth Republican Transition

Four years before the 1992 parliamentary and presidential elections, there was an earlier district assembly election which elected representatives to local government authorities. This 1988 decentralization policy had two major aims: to enable rural people to decide the issues that directly affected their lives and to boost local ownership of development initiatives at the grassroots level.¹⁸² The democratic decentralization of power established a blueprint for a national transition to a more inclusive, democratic system of government. Decentralization's effect on the political consciousness of Ghanaians was far reaching. The local assembly elections reinvigorated citizens' interest in the democratic process, cravings that had laid dormant in the post-Nkrumah years except for brief spells of democracy in 1969 and 1979. Decentralization also created a sense of ownership of the country's destiny among citizens in ways that altered the perceived aloofness which had characterized earlier government-citizen engagements. At the 1992 constitutive assembly in Accra to draft a new constitution, the political awareness brought about by the 1988 local government reforms was proved by the active involvement of rural people such as farmers, fishermen, and petty traders in crafting a

¹⁸¹ Kevin Shillington, *Ghana and the Rawlings Factor* (Macmillan, 1992).

¹⁸² George Gyan-Baffour, "Decentralisation as a Means to Improve Governance and Poverty Reduction: Experience from Ghana" (United Nations, June 3, 2003), <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan011360.pdf>.

national constitutional document that balanced the interests of key sectors of the social and economic system.¹⁸³

Ghanaian citizens facilitated a smooth election process in the lead up to the 1992 general elections in a variety of ways. In the absence of widespread broadcast technology in the 1990s, chiefs, opinion leaders, and the clergy led the way in spreading important information on events on the political calendar to citizens and encouraging them to partake in such exercises for the national good. The military's political power, one can argue, had diminished the chiefs' and the clergy's influence thus motivating the latter to wholeheartedly endorse the return to normalcy under a civilian administration. It was not surprising that members of the National Commission for Democracy (NCD) leaned on traditional leaders to spread important notices about voter registration to the people.¹⁸⁴ In December 1991, Mr. N.K Baidoo, a commission member of the NCD, urged community chiefs to "beat gong-gong to remind all eligible voters to register to enable them to exercise their civic rights."¹⁸⁵ Galvanizing people through chiefs expanded the participatory nature of the electoral process and bolstered political awareness in rural communities. Aside chiefs and government publications, election officials sought to engage people at the grassroots through circulars to churches, mosques, and youth

¹⁸³ Peter Arthur, "Democratic Consolidation in Ghana: The Role and Contribution of the Media, Civil Society and State Institutions," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 48, no. 2 (April 1, 2010): 203–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14662041003672510>.

¹⁸⁴ The NCD was the transitional body responsible for the registration and exhibition of the voters' register, educating people on the electoral system, and doing preparatory work for the whole political process and events leading to the general elections of 1992. The NCD was dissolved when the Independent National Electoral Commission was set up on November 12, 1991 as the country's main elections management body.

¹⁸⁵ "Eligible Voters Urged to Register," *Ghanaian Times*, October 14, 1991. N.K. Baidoo was a member of the National Commission on Democracy.

groups.¹⁸⁶ In effect, clergymen like Reverend Robert O.A Okine, Anglican Bishop of Koforidua-Ho Diocese, were encouraged to advise their congregants to get involved in the constitutional process outlined by the independent Interim National Electoral Commission.¹⁸⁷ The direct involvement of traditional and religious authorities deepened local ownership of the transition process. This embellished the democratization process in Ghana with a domestic character which validates Mbaku and Ihonvbere's assertion that much of the African democratic change in the 1990s was predominantly localized rather than external.¹⁸⁸ More broadly, the localized, community-led democratization in Ghana's transition challenged American assumptions that democratic change was a function of the U.S. aid initiatives and political maneuvering in developing countries. As the political history of Ghana demonstrates, interest groups such as the clergy and chiefs appreciated the stability that African forms of democracy provided for citizens.

The domesticated democracy transition in Ghana extended so far hinterland that officials confirmed the depth of participation rural voters showed in the process. Mr. Baidoo was impressed, for instance, with "high figures recorded at some of the centres, especially in rural areas" when he visited far off communities to monitor on-going voter registration exercises in 1991.¹⁸⁹ He encouraged many potential voters to come out to register for their voters' identification cards ahead of the 1992 general elections. The participation of rural communities in the transition process illustrated political interest and awareness on their part which added to the success of the transition process. That

¹⁸⁶ Carly Ahiabile and Patrick Super Nyembe, "Provisional Register to Be Exhibited, December," *Ghanaian Times*, October 19, 1991. Because Ghana practices a universal suffrage, people of all ages and genders were targeted by the informational campaigns.

¹⁸⁷ "Christians Urged to Ensure Transition Process Success," *Ghanaian Times*, October 29, 1991.

¹⁸⁸ Mbaku and Ihonvbere, *Multiparty Democracy and Political Change: Constraints to Democratization in Africa*.

¹⁸⁹ "Eligible Voters Urged to Register."

passion for democracy among Ghanaian rural people did not stem from external influences such as Voice of America or the British Broadcasting Cooperation. In fact, there was no widespread broadcast technology in the 1990s to reach such places. The determined involvement of citizens could therefore be attributed to a genuine commitment to political change on the part of Ghanaians who had gone through many years of military than democratic rules. Home based political experience was therefore a far more important stimulus for democratization than U.S. aid or influence.

Widespread party activism in the early 1990s also pushed the political boundaries further to include people on the fringes of political society. Academics, working professionals and civil servants equally demanded a return to constitutional rule and remained steadfast in their demands for genuine rule of law that put citizen liberties at the heart of constitutional governance. Even while the 1992 constitutional draft was on-going, the annual New Year School at the University of Ghana, Legon, called for an end to ethnic politics to help sustain the new democracy.¹⁹⁰ The recommendation did make it into the final constitutional draft through various provisions made for constituting a government of national character. Political parties, mainly opposition groups, also organized under an Alliance of Democratic Forces Ghana (ADFG) to demand greater transparency, competence and impartiality from independent bodies responsible for aspects of the transition process.

By July 1992, the ADFG was clamoring for wider coverage of eligible voters in the voter registration exercise. The alliance insisted that the Interim National Electoral

¹⁹⁰ Charles Neequaye and James Addy, "Political Parties Must Cut across Ethnic Boundaries," *Ghanaian Times*, January 4, 1992. The annual New Year School is a gathering of intellectuals, workers, and citizens at the University of Ghana. It is a non-partisan event called to deliberate salient national issues and provide solutions where possible. The New Year School calls mostly on eminent minds to engage in discussions on salient national issues. Its recommendations have fed some governments policies over the years.

Commission (INEC) expand logistics and personnel to more communities to register more voters.¹⁹¹ Given the long Ghanaian history of voting, party organization, and partisanship, it was not surprising that the ADFG ferociously opposed perceived disenfranchisement of sections of the population in these early stages of democratic transition.¹⁹² Such activism in the face of military dictatorship held the government to account and limited the possible control of independent institutions by a military government accustomed to giving orders and commanding obedience.

Partisans' watchfulness over the INEC and other independent bodies equally gave these institutions an air of freedom from government intrusion because of the weight of citizen power that political parties commanded and their potential to exert that power on the military government if the latter tried to influence independent state institutions. This political party attentiveness furthers Rakner's and Lotshwao's explanation that foreign assistance to accountability groups like political parties may strengthen procedural democracy by enabling parties watch and inhibit executive excesses.¹⁹³ In Ghana's case, political groups, and civil society actors were asserting their autonomy by watching the ruling elites closing in the dying days of military rule. The independence of action on the part of organized Ghanaian political forces without external support revealed the relevance of localized leadership and ownership of the process of democratic change.

In 1992, the intimations of citizen power were already being felt in the media. In response to the early end of voter registration, Grace Addo, a concerned citizen, pointed out, "This is most unfair and I think the Electoral Commission must do something about

¹⁹¹ Andy Quao, "Political Parties Petition INEC on Voters Register," *Ghanaian Times*, July 11, 1992.

¹⁹² Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism, 1850-1928*; Buah, "Governance of Gold Coast under Governor Guggisberg"; Buah, *A History of Ghana*.

¹⁹³ Rakner, "Institutionalizing the Pro-Democracy Movements: The Case of Zambia's Movement for Multiparty Democracy."; Lotshwao, "Donor Assistance and Democracy in Botswana."

it immediately.”¹⁹⁴ Another writer, Isaac Arthur, appealed to the authorities to explain what would be done about those who did not meet the deadline.¹⁹⁵ These citizens clearly understood the power of their votes to change the trajectory of the country’s political future and wanted to be part of that change. Other Ghanaians added their call to how the new democracy should thrive and sustain itself. While acknowledging that Ghana had to copy what others did in building sustainable democracies, Ebo Afful, a voter, advised Ghanaians to look to the “creativity and the best experts...in the country” for inspiration in crafting a workable constitutional architecture for Ghana.¹⁹⁶

Afful and others departed from the traditional narrative that Ghanaian constitutional experts, like other developing world scholars, should use U.S. democracy as a model for casting their own forms of political institutions. In fact, the rejection of western style democracy, for Afful, required Ghanaians to see “democracy as an educational process that is attained through true understanding of the culture of the people, infinite patience, and precise attention to the values and sentiments of the people.”¹⁹⁷ Self-worth was integral to the construction of a democratic national identity and the public did not want a photocopied version of another country’s constitutional documents, practices, and institutions in the name of democratization. Rather, they sought a more practical, workable constitutional and democratic system that solved Ghanaian problems and assured them the opportunity to attain the material progress achievable under a peaceful democracy. This understanding of democracy contrasted sharply with the American enthusiasm evident in statements by Nau, Atwood, Lake, and

¹⁹⁴ Grace Addo, “Electoral Commission-Why This?,” *Ghanaian Times*, February 29, 1992.

¹⁹⁵ Isaac Arthur, “Do I Have the Right to Vote?,” *Ghanaian Times*, February 29, 1992.

¹⁹⁶ Ebo Afful, “...That Democracy May Work This Time,” *Ghanaian Times*, February 4, 1992.

¹⁹⁷ Ebo Afful, “...That Democracy May Work This Time.”

Clinton that the U.S. needed to export democracy to the developing world.¹⁹⁸ Ghanaians clearly showed confidence in their own abilities, self-worth, experience and national character to create and sustain a workable democracy.

Policymakers like P.V Obeng, one of the most influential minds in the Provincial National Defense Council (PNDC), held the view that developing countries did not necessarily see democracy in the Westminster style.¹⁹⁹ Politicians and the public in Ghana looked beyond Western forms of democracy for a bouquet of constitutional options that could sustain the democratizing initiatives at home. Another leading figure in government, Dan Abodakpi, a deputy secretary for Trade and Tourism, believed that the stability sought in democracy could not be achieved by simply copying foreign models.²⁰⁰ True to these considerations, the final constitutional document made innovations that were uncharacteristic of western models. For instance, it required the institution of a Council of State, a kind of elder statesmen chamber, to advise the president on critical national issues such as appointments to independent state bodies.²⁰¹ The concept was derived wholly from the advisory role of elders in Ghanaian indigenous political systems. In the traditional system, elders of state from clans, chiefdoms, and royal lineages served in an advisory council to the chief on matters of judicial settlements, customary practices, and the finances of the kingdom, chiefdom, or state. Indigenous politics therefore contained inklings of democratic governance and political checks from which a modern state could extensively borrow. The constitution also banned chiefs from active politics so they, the chiefs, could focus on their core spiritual

¹⁹⁸ Nau, "The Moral Argument for U.S. Leadership"; Shipler, "Missionaries of Democracy: U.S. Aid for Global Pluralism."; "Excerpts from Clinton's Speech on Foreign Policy Leadership."

¹⁹⁹ "C'wealth Urged to Assist Poorer States," *Ghanaian Times*, October 1991.

²⁰⁰ Peter Korda, "Ghana's Future Requires Evolving New Structures," *Ghanaian Times*, October 28, 1991.

²⁰¹ Ghana Constitution, "The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992."

and cultural function as foci of unity and national identity.²⁰² It was these innovations that people such as P.V. Obeng and Ebo Afful wished to see in Ghana's experiment in constitutional government.

The public interest in deciding what type of constitutional system to adopt spoke to intense local democratizing efforts unhitched in any way to U.S. or other Western democratic exports. Ghanaians were imbedding their unique historical experiences into the form of democracy they desired. In doing so, they showed political autonomy in ways that Washington perceived to be absent in the developing world where the U.S. thought it was promoting democracy. The denial of local historical conditions in U.S. democratization advancement in many states was one of the many criticisms against post-Cold War Washington foreign policy.²⁰³ In Ghana's case, local efforts in crafting a constitution defied the American belief that the adoption of U.S. political institutions and processes implied genuine democratization.

In Ghana, the amplified popular participation in politics prevented the army from excessive use of power in the last days of the transition. The military junta, led by Chairman Jerry John Rawlings, recognized that the regime's quest to transition Ghana into a democratic force depended on "the healthy relations it had with the totality of Ghanaians." Popular participation improved so that that military intimidation lost its full potency in limiting citizens' political buoyancy. The military government thus adopted a

²⁰² Earlier attempts in the Second and Third Republics to allow chiefs in politics created tense relationships between politicians and chiefs when politicians suspected or believed chiefs sympathized with other political parties. The 1992 constitutional drafters were taking cues from these unpleasant experiences from the past.

²⁰³ Cavell, "The National Endowment for Democracy and the Export of "Made-in-America" Democracy."; Cox, Ikenberry, and Inoguchi, *American Democracy Promotion*.

policy of loosening its grip over the political space to enable a smooth democratic transition.²⁰⁴

Also, Ghanaians' promotion of democracy at home took cognizance of larger issues which democracy promotion from the U.S. missed. One of the "MORTAL DANGERS" [sic] that Llyoyd Thompson, a concerned citizen, cautioned against was that the new democracy might become weakened through cynicism, apathy and neglect.²⁰⁵ The campaign against indifference accounted for greater public interest in the affairs of the transition process in ways that placed ordinary citizens at the fulcrum of the debates over policy. The opposition parties and the incumbent military junta, which later metamorphosed into a civilian political group, contested policy issues to gain the appeal of the masses. Public interest fed this contest of ideas between political parties and the incumbent elites in state-owned media. In the political section of the *Daily Graphic*, for instance, all four of the leading political parties were evenly represented in expressing their concerns or ideas before and after the general elections. For a military government seeking democratic transition to contend with opposition groups for political advertising space in state-owned media implied not only opposition confidence in the political environment, but the ruling military's surrender to growing public interest in free public space for political exchanges. The state media accommodation of varied policy opinion speaks to the high professionalism and autonomy of the *Daily Graphic* and *Ghanaian Times* as public service media bodies. As well, it shows the extent to which the military regime wanted to invest in democracy as they prepared for the transition.

²⁰⁴ Nau, "The Moral Argument for U.S. Leadership."

²⁰⁵ Llyoyd Thompson, "Taking Part in Democracy: Letter," *Ghanaian Times*, March 9, 1992.

Political parties' collective participation in the political process made public education possible on matters such as the constitution, political obligations of citizens, and the extent of rights granted under the Fourth Republic. Groups like the teachers' association in Damongo lent their energies to promote democracy through education on the constitution.²⁰⁶ They distributed free copies of the abridged constitution to the pupils of junior high schools in rural areas to create awareness of the new document. That education deepened the rule of law by enabling many young people to read, understand, and imbibe key aspects of the constitution.

More radical citizens went further to advocate that political rather than military actors populate the political space in the lead up to the election. Disdain of military rule had become so pervasive that prodemocracy forces in Ghanaian universities and professional bodies did not wait for the end of the transition to hold the first human rights conference in Accra to discuss the issues of "human and civil liberties," as well as how to safeguard them.²⁰⁷ Lawyer Akoto Ampaw, a private legal practitioner, led the New Democratic Movement (NDM) to press for complete military withdrawal from the political space because, in his view, military visibility in political discussions did not inspire confidence in the political process.²⁰⁸ The NDM went as far as calling for a new transitional government to take over from the military government until elections were conducted. It also required that paramilitary bodies such as the Committees for the

²⁰⁶ GNA, "Damongo Teachers Promote Education on Constitution," *Ghanaian Times*, September 1, 1992.

²⁰⁷ Times Reporter, "Human Rights Conference," *Ghanaian Times*, September 8, 1992.

²⁰⁸ Peter Korda and Kwame Adjei Jnr, "NDM: Transitional Plan Aims to Perpetuate PNDC's Rule," *Ghanaian Times*, September 4, 1992. The demand to disband the CDRs (Rawling's paramilitary body for safeguarding his military revolution) met with official disinterest because CDRs were important tools of political organization for the government. Their potency diminished as the democratic experiment progressed despite feeble attempts at reviving their influence in the politics of the National Democratic Congress, the civilian political party that came out of the military regime.

Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) be disbanded. Human rights, rule of law and free political activities stood at the heart of demands from these groups.

These calls for respect for human rights, limitation of military visibility in partisan politics, and a freer press or media were local initiatives that came from citizens committed to ending the failed attempts at military rule. The call by Ghanaian political actors for lesser military involvement placed Ghanaian agency at the centre of political change and activities in the democratization process in Ghana in ways that made external presence complementary to indigenous efforts. Ghanaian agency in the democratizing process reinforces Van De Walle, Mbaku and Ihonvbere, and Hearn's assessment that home-grown democracy activists are more effective at sustaining democratization in Africa.²⁰⁹ American commitments, while commendable, did not gain traction in influencing or changing the course of Ghana's democratization process. There was a disconnect between what Americans saw as their role in advancing democracy and the locals' understanding of the political transformations they were leading.

3.4. The Ghanaian Response to the End of the Cold War

The fall of the Berlin Wall sent cautious optimism throughout the world. In Ghana, however, policy makers were forced to rethink their approach, politics, and worldview in matters of international relations. In Ghana's budget for 1992, the finance minister, Kwesi Botchwey, gave the clearest indication of how the country felt about the end of the Cold War when he recognized that the Soviet Union's collapse caused economic

²⁰⁹ Hearn, "Foreign Aid, Democratisation and Civil Society in Africa: A Study of South Africa, Ghana and Uganda"; Mbaku and Ihonvbere, *Multiparty Democracy and Political Change: Constraints to Democratization in Africa*; Van de Walle, *Foreign Aid in Dangerous Places: The Donors and Mali's Democracy*.

dislocation for the former COMECON.²¹⁰ He added that “In consequence, both the United States and the European community are giving priority to the economic reconstruction in eastern Europe, which will inevitably entail reduced flows of concessionary finance and private investment to Africa and other developing regions.”²¹¹ Acknowledging this policy implication for Ghana at the end of the Cold War positioned the Ghanaian administration to respond to the new political dynamics in the world.

One obvious apprehension, for Ghanaian leaders, was the evaporating capital flow, resources that had been largely responsible for the government’s ability to implement the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). These funds also helped a follow-up programme called the Program of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (PAMSCAD).²¹² The leadership recognized that not even becoming the star pupil of structural adjustment in Africa could attract foreign direct aid or other forms of concessionary finance after the Cold War. Added to this, the SAP widened the gap between the rich and poor in Ghana as well as impoverishing the urban core of bureaucrats and low income earners whose productivity and purchasing power oiled the

²¹⁰ Kwesi Botchwey, “The ’92 Budget Statement and Economic Policy (1),” *Ghanaian Times*, February 3, 1992. The COMECON, formally, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, was a group of Communist states under Soviet leadership after the Second World War. Though an economic relationship of Eastern European states, the COMECON was the Soviet attempt at countering the American use of the Marshall Plan to win European states to its position in the Cold War.

²¹¹ Botchwey, “The ’92 Budget Statement and Economic Policy (1)”.

²¹² The Structural Adjustment Programme under Ghanaian head of state, Jerry John Rawlings, started in April 1983. It put restrictions on government expenditures with critics saying that it affected the poor the most. Between 1983 and 1992, six International Monetary Fund programmes were implemented by Ghana to restore fiscal discipline, improve the value of the local currency and assure macroeconomic stability. Following the criticism, the government embarked on the Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (PAMSCAD). For details see Kwame Boafo-Arthur, “Ghana: Structural Adjustment, Democratization, and the Politics of Continuity,” *African Studies Review* 42, no. 2 (1999): 41–72, <https://doi.org/10.2307/525364>; Kwabena Donkor, *Structural Adjustment and Mass Poverty in Ghana* (Policy Press, 2002), <http://policypress.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1332/policypress/9781861343956.001.0001/upso-9781861343956-chapter-9>.

economy and assured growth.²¹³ It was to remedy these problems that PAMSCAD was created and implemented. Though the SAP and PAMSCAD were well-intentioned to improve Ghana's economy, they had the reverse impact of limiting social mobility and economic growth for the vast majority of the citizens.²¹⁴ The realization that capital flow from the West was dwindling formed the basis of official government reaction and action at the end of the Cold War.

In examining politics at the end of the Cold War, Thad Dunning, a professor of political science, asserts that the Soviet defeat hastened the democratization process in countries like Ghana.²¹⁵ It is, however, debatable if that was the case with Ghana. Rather, one can argue that the Cold War amplified local Ghanaian commitment to a democratization process that was already underway since 1988 when local government elections were held to boost grassroots ownership of government. As Finance Minister Kwesi Botchway noted, in reference to the negative implications of the end of Cold War hostilities on African economies, "This is particularly unfortunate at a time when many African countries are in the process of reforming and re-structuring their economies and political systems."²¹⁶ In Ghana, a national consultative assembly was already in progress drafting a new constitution when the finance minister delivered the budget statement in 1992.

Popular understanding of the global geopolitical shift within Ghana also acknowledged the economic implications of Eastern Europe's freedom on African

²¹³ John L. Adedeji, "The Legacy of JJ Rawlings in Ghanaian Politics, 1979-2000," *African Studies Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (2001): 1–27.

²¹⁴ Donkor, *Structural Adjustment and Mass Poverty in Ghana*.

²¹⁵ Thad Dunning, "Conditioning the Effects of Aid: Cold War Politics, Donor Credibility, and Democracy in Africa," *International Organization* 58, no. 2 (April 2004): 409–23, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818304582073>.

²¹⁶ Botchway, "The '92 Budget Statement and Economic Policy (1)."

nations. Journalist Frank Asmah, writing in the *Ghanaian Times*, lamented the drying up of economic assistance and general trade concessions for Africa on the world stage after the Cold War. The situation was further complicated by Western diversion of “vital economic assistance from poor developing nations to provide support to the new governments in Eastern Europe.”²¹⁷ Eastern European matters supplanted African issues in Western capitals in a way that cut back economic advantages for many African countries despite renewed efforts at constitutional reforms

In the post-Cold War environment, Ghanaian authorities actively shaped foreign assistance politics to address the concerns they had about the negative outcomes of the geopolitical shift on their economy. Ghana, for instance, joined other developing economies in 1991 to reject the United Kingdom’s proposal at a Commonwealth meeting to conditionalize foreign assistance to the “observance of human rights or democracy.”²¹⁸ The delegation from Accra, led by P.V. Obeng, reasoned that different countries would respond differently to the advent of democratization on the continent. For this reason, Obeng thought no hurried steps should be taken to coerce countries into political or constitutional reforms that they might not be prepared for.²¹⁹ More importantly, the adoption of democracy did not mean states had to copy the specific systems of politics, practices, institutions and procedures of London and Washington. African states needed time to decide and mold what would be best for their particular

²¹⁷ Frank Asmah, “Any Place for the World’s Poor Now?,” *Ghanaian Times*, November 6, 1991. Lamentations like Asmah’s were commonplace among Ghanaian policy makers, workers, and citizens knowledgeable of global politics. Others included Ebo Afful, “...That Democracy may Work this Time,” *Ghanaian Times*, February 26, 1992, page 4; Daniel S. Suglo, “Referendum Is Necessary,” *Ghanaian Times*, March 5, 1992, page 4.

²¹⁸ GNA, “PNDC Aims at Democracy in Law and in Practice- P.V.,” *Ghanaian Times*, October 23, 1991.

²¹⁹ GNA, “PNDC Aims at Democracy in Law and in Practice- P.V.”

social and political contexts, Obeng argued. In Ghana, these arguments echoed a desire to forge resilient political structures with little external input. They also expressed deep awareness among policymakers that democratization needed local will-power to succeed. Building the blocks of transition to the rule of law on indigenous aspirations, enthusiasm and motivation, rather than American or any other form of external encouragement perpetuated liberty and freedom which Ghanaians could rightly own. By emphasizing the local leadership of the new political reforms, Ghanaian leaders undercut the U.S. perception of its role in these democratizing processes as well as the desirability of American forms of institutions and processes for developing states.²²⁰

Nevertheless, the inherent values of political reforms differed from one African country to another. Despite these differences, the main motivation in every political capital was a desire to make democracy subservient to the larger development needs of citizens. Michael P. Besha, a continental trade union leader, advised that democratization in Africa should help people acquire and sustain long lasting development.²²¹ He restated the ubiquitous belief that Africans must seek democracy not to please external powers but to better the material and cultural wellbeing of their citizens. Among the benefits democracy should help achieve were “food sufficiency, human resources development, capacity building and the eradication of poverty, ignorance, and diseases.”²²² In the specific case of Ghana, there were endogenous socio-economic conditions such as crumbling infrastructure and economic challenges which animated Ghanaian

²²⁰ “Excerpts from President Clinton’s State of the Union Message”; Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy*; Stewart, “Friction in U.S. Foreign Policy”; Akram Malik, “Analyzing the Motivations of US Development Aid to Africa.”

²²¹ G. Frank Asmah, “Democratization Agenda Must Cover Dev. Issues,” *Ghanaian Times*, October 23, 1991. Michael P. Besha was the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU).

²²² Asmah, “Democratization Agenda Must Cover Dev. Issues.”

democratization advocates to challenge the status quo.²²³ In that context, external U.S. assistance alone could not deliver those economic and infrastructure goals because such expectations could not be realized through a large shipment of aid. Rather, local people disheartened at the unfavourable political and economic conditions at home stood up for a transformation that works. As Ali Mazrui, the Kenyan professor of politics, put it: “You can tolerate loss of freedom if you get prosperity in return. But loss of freedom and deepening poverty is not a very good bargain. And the African people have decided that enough is enough.”²²⁴

This growing concept of a transactional relationship with democracy did more than external influences to expand the boundaries of free enterprise, the rule of law, and free press in Ghana.²²⁵ That transactional conceptualization of democracy gives credence to the assertion, made by Adam Przeworski, Michael Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi, that economic growth and democracy are bedfellows.²²⁶ In many ways, the presence of military, autocratic regimes in previous decades in Africa was largely due to the persistence of Western powers in developing cordial relations with strong men despite their poor economic management and human rights records.²²⁷ It was therefore logical that in the absence of external support for autocratic regimes, citizens

²²³ Jeff Haynes, “Ghana From Personalist to Democratic Rule,” in *Democracy and Political Change in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Routledge, 2002), 104–27. Haynes claims that despite the macroeconomic stability created under the PNDC, the economic gains did not reflect in the economic lives of the larger population. The star-pupil status of Ghana in the Structural Adjustment Program did little to assuage popular discontent in the country because of worsening economic conditions for the majority of the people.

²²⁴ Jost, “Is Democracy Taking Root in Sub-Saharan Africa?”

²²⁵ By transactional democracy, we mean the expectation Ghanaians had that their support for democratization would yield them social and economic dividends in the form of improved livelihoods and stability.

²²⁶ Adam Przeworski et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950–1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²²⁷ Amanda A. Licht, “Coming into Money: The Impact of Foreign Aid on Leader Survival,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 54, no. 1 (February 1, 2010): 58–87, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002709351104>; Michela Wrong, “Mystery of Mobutu's Millions,” *New Statesman* 26 (2007).

would stand up to demand efficient economic management and corresponding human dignity. The situation in Ghana was thus a consequence of the military's failure to better the economic lot of the people.

As has been explained in this chapter, the democratic transition in Ghana succeeded due largely to the involvement and enthusiasm of Ghanaians of all walks of life. The agitations, debates, negotiations, and compromises citizens made with each other expanded opportunities for peaceable democratic growth. Without this activism, the groundswell of support would not have been present for democratization, even if millions in American foreign assistance had poured into Ghana. External ideas, financial support, and technical additions were at best complementary to Ghanaian efforts at implementing constitutional forms of governments. The predominantly Ghanaian nature of the processes of reforms, the reforms themselves, and the enduring commitment to those reforms undermine the notion that the U.S. exported democracy norms to countries like Ghana with supposedly minimal understanding of the rule of law. In the next chapter, I examine the continuing effort at democratic consolidation as further proof that the Ghanaian political experience undercut Washington's largely paternalistic sense of democracy promotion.

CHAPTER 4
DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION: POST-ELECTION GHANAIAN POLITICS
AND DEMOCRACY, 1993-2001

In this chapter, I explore Ghanaian politics and the continuing efforts to safeguard democracy in Ghana after the 1992 elections. This analysis provides a lense through which to understand how democracy was consolidated as well as the role Ghanaians played in building and sustaining it. In the post-election period, Ghanaian democracy gained more meaning through the watchdog functions of parties, citizens and civil society groups. The consolidation of democracy in Ghana highlight that democratization is an ongoing process whose success depends on local interests and their willingness to invest in continuing reforms. It further shows that foreign meanings of democracy cannot be used to sustain a democracy because local conditions and context define the choices of activists, leaders and the people. Ghana's democracy consolidation essentialized the country's experiences and context in ways that rejected American views and perceived impositions of U.S. models of democracy and the practice of the rule of law.

4.1. The Growth and Consolidation of Democratic Institutions

The events after the 1992 elections in Ghana, while boosting confidence in the return to multiparty rule, highlighted deep interest in consolidating the gains of reforms. There were, however, hotly contested spaces among interest groups throughout the post-election years. In the lead up to the next elections, opposition parties and sympathizers raised issues with many aspects of the process. These concerns included the voters' register, the duration of registration, and the ability of the Interim Electoral Commission to manage

the elections without executive influence. Such concerns eventually caused some glitches for the transition process and the main opposition party, the New Patriotic Party which rejected the election results as not credible.²²⁸ External observers, such as the Commonwealth election monitoring team and the Carter Center, were cognizant of some irregularities.²²⁹ Notwithstanding these concerns, these independent observers passed the elections as generally free and fair with mass participation.

In November 1991, the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) government had appointed an Interim National Electoral Commission (INEC) under the leadership of Dr. Yaw Afari Gyan to take over from the National Commission for Democracy (NCD). The administration went further to lift the ban on partisan politics on March 6, 1992 to pave the way for electioneering activities in the lead up to the 1992 elections. Before the ban was lifted, opposition political elements had already started organizing under different names preparing for participation in the political process. Though the political opposition remained fragmented at these early stages of the partisanship process, they presented a formidable policy and advocacy opposition to the ruling military junta. In fact, their insistence to the INEC to compile a new voters' register so irked the government that the Attorney-General made a reasoned response to their demands citing the high cost of a new register as inimical to the national interest.²³⁰ The opposition also asked that both parliamentary and presidential elections be held on the same day to save money and assure credibility of the process. Though this idea was, in hindsight, very commendable, the INEC declined that proposition. It argued to the

²²⁸ Mike Oquaye, "The Ghanaian Elections of 1992- A Dissenting View," *African Affairs* 94, no. 375 (1995): 259-75.

²²⁹ "Interim Statement" (Commonwealth Observer Group, November 4, 1992); "Ghana Election Mission Report" (Carter Center, November 6, 1992).

²³⁰ "A-G Responds Opposition Parties," *Ghanaian Times*, August 13, 1992.

contrary that there was no strong evidence that separate election dates for the presidential and parliamentary elections benefited the country financially.

By mid-1992, many political parties went to national conferences to elect national officers or presidential candidates. This stage of Ghana's politics was heavily crowded with many political parties. In the parliamentary elections, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), a party formed by leading members of the Rawlings military regime, and its partner, the National Convention Party, won an overwhelming majority of the seats. Though the NPP, the largest opposition party in the country, did not take part in the parliamentary elections, other parties such as the People's Heritage Party (PHP), People's National Convention (PNC), and the National Independence Party (NIP), picked up significant numbers of seats across the country in 1992. The political space was therefore highly saturated, allowing the incumbent the advantage of politically nullifying the fragmented votes of the opposition forces in key areas of the country. Although the proliferation of parties fragmented opposition forces it did not dim their visibility. Rather, it helped various politically active individuals and groups seek and find their political identity as a prelude to merger with likeminded groups to form stronger parties. For instance, the EAGLES Party and the New Generation Alliance (NGA) became part of the NDC, the ruling party that metamorphosed from the military regime.²³¹

After the 1992 elections, the opposition parties decried the outcome of the polls accusing the NDC and the INEC of rigging the elections. The NPP under Prof. Adu Boahen refused to sit in parliament and declined participation in the transition

²³¹ Paul Nugent, "Ethnicity as an Explanatory Factor in the Ghana 2000 Elections," *African Issues* 29, no. 1-2 (2001): 2-7; GNA, "The NGA," *Ghanaian Times*, September 8, 1992. The New Generation Alliance was formed by Mr. Harry Sawyerr, a leading political figure in the country. Its general secretary was Mr. E.W. Nortey.

programme.²³² The apprehensions of the opposition over the voters' register before the elections among others were all early signs of probable non-cooperation which were never fully addressed satisfactorily. These parties hoped the U.S. support for the process would involve financing a new electoral register to assure a degree of expanded access for many citizens who were not captured by earlier registration exercises. This expectation was founded on a collaboration between a U.S. team and the INEC to study the voters' register and to offer solutions on how to make it better suited to the needs of the upcoming elections. As part of the process, the U.S. embassy had pledged to help sanitize the register.²³³

However, the Ghanaian Attorney-General pointed out that "the hopes expressed by the ADF for external assistance towards that exercise was a mere illusion" because the U.S. aid for the register was only \$550,000 (C577,500,000 in 1994 values) a far cry from the required capital.²³⁴ Given that the whole exercise would have cost three billion Ghanaian cedis (U.S. \$ 2,857,142.85 in 1994 values), U.S. support for the process was woefully inadequate.²³⁵ Despondent, some of the opposition parties, namely the New Patriotic Party, declined to partake in the parliamentary component of the elections.

²³² Prof. Adu Boahen was a professor at Ghana's first university, the University of Ghana. Educated at Oxford, Boahen was among a generation of outstanding African scholars who set new heights in studying colonial and precolonial African history. As a politician, Boahen became the main pillar behind the formation of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), a conservative political party that succeeded similar ones of the past. He became the party's flagbearer in 1992. His leadership over the turbulent years of emergent democratic rule put the NPP in the national spotlight. Another candidate, Mr. J.A. Kuffour, beat Boahen to the 1996 NPP presidential slot but lost the general election. Kuffour contested the 2000 elections and was successful.

²³³ Times Reporter, "INEC Reacts to ADFG Petition on Transitional Programme," *Ghanaian Times*, July 31, 1992.

²³⁴ GNA, "A-G Reacts to Demands of Parties Conference," *Ghanaian Times*, August 13, 1992. The Cedi is Ghana's currency.

²³⁵ The exchange rate at the end of 1994 was U.S. \$1 to C1050 according to the budget and economic policy statement of the Government of Ghana. See Kwesi Botcheway, "The 1995 Budget," *Daily Graphic*, February 3, 1995, page 8.

Clearly, the democracy promotion rhetoric of Washington immediately after the Cold War did not prioritize African electoral reforms. The U.S. drag in financially supporting Ghana's electoral reforms during the transition weakened American claim as front runner in the democratizing environment in the early 1990s. The lack of interest in helping African political reforms like Ghana's case in 1992 only strengthens Schraeder's, Clough's, and Copson's point that U.S. foreign policy neglected Africa for a long time throughout the Twentieth century.²³⁶ Even in the absence of Cold War strategic concerns in the 1990s, Washington's priorities of engagement relegated Africa to the background at its crucial time of democratization.

Following the declaration of non-cooperation with the transition or participation in parliament, some opposition parties under the Inter-Party Coordinating Committee made up of the NPP, PNC, NIP, and PHP held a press conference stating their reason for boycotting parliament and the entire transition process.²³⁷ In spite of their non-cooperation, the opposition parties pledged to promote and help expand the frontiers of democracy by holding the government accountable. Subsequent opposition protests over issues of public spending, taxation, and individual freedom all confirmed their commitment to the process. On the other hand, the ruling party appeared to have taken a long time to shed itself of its pre-transition inclination to use force. For instance, Alhaji Muhamdau Maida, Northern Regional Chairman of the NDC, while promising to cooperate with the opposition to observe the rule of law, added that the NDC would not "countenance destructive criticism and other activities that would rock the boat because

²³⁶ Schraeder, *United States Foreign Policy toward Africa, 1995*; Clough, *Free at Last? 1992*; Copson, *The United States in Africa*.

²³⁷ Graphic Reporter, "Parties Pledge to Promote Democracy," *Ghanaian Times*, January 15, 1993.

so much has been done already.”²³⁸ Statements such as these limited the capacity of government and opposition groups to arrive at common ground.²³⁹ Additionally, Maida’s statement indicated the lack of quick adaptation of the majority of the former PNDC to the dictates of democratic change. But, as would be seen later, the popular insistence of the people triumphed over such political interpretations of democracy.

The absence of the opposition in parliament was clearly a matter of concern for government because a democracy without multiparty activism would fail to attract international respect. Also, there was more to be gained from a multiparty parliamentary democracy than from a parliament dominated by the ruling party alone.²⁴⁰ For this reason, the ruling NDC proposed the idea of professional talks with the opposing parties. Kwesi Botchwey sent early signals to this effect in January 1993 at a teachers’ town hall meeting.²⁴¹ The government realized that “some ideas may come from them that are better than what we have and if they are we shall accept them. When we are able to sit down and talk in a principled way with the national interest well defined, we are certain that we would be motivated not by sectional interest or gain, but with the loftier ends of national development.”²⁴² Getting all sides involved in the new democracy thus overrode other partisan interests of the ruling party. President Rawlings even extended a conciliatory hand to all rival political parties in his 1993 inaugural speech, promising that the administration would: “continue to reach out to those groups which withdrew their participation from the electoral process because it is our aim to establish a culture of

²³⁸ GNA, “NDC Assures Parties of Cooperation,” *Ghanaian Times*, January 15, 1993.

²³⁹ Opposition parties included all groups contesting the elections.

²⁴⁰ Jeffries and Thomas, “The Ghanaian Elections of 1992.”

²⁴¹ Debrah Fynn and Lloyd Evans, “Govt, Other Parties to Open Professional Talks,” *Ghanaian Times*, January 23, 1993.

²⁴² Fynn and Evans, “Govt, Other Parties to Open Professional Talks.”

tolerance, consultation and consensus-building based on mutual respect for one another and practical recognition that we are one people with a common destiny.”²⁴³

Eventually, the NPP sent indications of its readiness to dialogue with government. The request was in response to parliament’s invitation for them to take part in the formal opening of parliament in April 1993.²⁴⁴ While a patriotic move from the NPP, elements within government took issue with the request. For J. Tony Aidoo, the opposition’s earlier rejection of the outcome of the polls made it unacceptable that they would now want to engage the administration.²⁴⁵ Political neutrals, on the other hand, decried the fact that the NPP’s absence was a huge loss for the country. Daniel Buor noted, for instance, that, “in view of the withdrawal of certain political parties from parliamentary election...parliamentary opposition whittled down to insignificance.”²⁴⁶

These neutral complaints strengthened the NPP’s resolve to involve government in professional talks. The party reiterated its call through its chairman, J.B da Rocha, in a news interview on national radio on July 31, 1993. The ruling Progressive Alliance, a group of left leaning coalition parties including the main ruling party the NDC, welcomed the decision as indicative that the opposition conceded that peace, stability and development were key to national progress.²⁴⁷ Commitment to dialoguing for effective involvement in the democratic process assured full access to insightful criticism for

²⁴³ Debrah Fynn and Joe Okyere, “Akwaaba, Fourth Republic,” *Ghanaian Times*, January 8, 1992.

²⁴⁴ Fynn Debrah and Joe Okyere, “NPP Seeks Dialogue with Govt,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, May 20, 1993.

²⁴⁵ Tony Aidoo, “Dialogue between NDC and the Opposition,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, May 21, 1993.

²⁴⁶ Daniel Buor, “A Healthy Opposition and Human Rights,” *Daily Graphic*, February 21, 1994.

²⁴⁷ GNA, “Progressive Alliance Welcomes NPP’s Decision,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, August 9, 1993.

decision-making on major national issues. As President Rawlings complained during the transition the “absence of parliamentary opposition is a setback to progress.”²⁴⁸

The change in posture of the NPP and other parties was due to early intimations of genuine independence they saw in the new democratic political institutions. For instance, the party won a writ at the Supreme Court challenging the legitimacy of existing members of the local government system to elect district chief executives under the Fourth Republic in 1993.²⁴⁹ Justice G.E.K Aikens granted an interlocutory injunction on the local government elections process forcing the Electoral Commission to postpone the exercise.²⁵⁰ Similarly, the PNC filed a high court writ in April 1993 challenging the appointment of individuals by government for election as district chief executives. The writ was upheld. Such legal victories boosted the confidence of the parties that impartiality of institutions had come to stay and that engagement in the political space guaranteed them a hearing. In 1993, another writ was raised contending that the celebration of military holidays such the 31st December Revolution Day were unconstitutional under a democratic government. Again, the plaintiffs won. The president appeared unprepared for this new wave of institutional independence which challenged all he had known as a military head of state. Rawlings lamented that: “the recent narrow majority decision of the Supreme Court about the celebration of 31st December Revolution also raises fundamental questions about the scope of the Supreme Court’s function vis-à-vis the legislative powers of parliament and indeed the prerogative of the executive. The experience of constitutional democracies teaches that nothing is gained

²⁴⁸ Joe Bradford Nyinah, “Absence of Parliamentary Opposition Is Setback to Progress,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, August 21, 1993.

²⁴⁹ Yaw Boadu Ayebofoh, “On a Bad Note,” *Daily Graphic*, February 4, 1994.

²⁵⁰ GNA, “Supreme Court Restrains NEC,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, August 18, 1993.

from confrontationist or subversive attitudes from elements in any arm of government.”²⁵¹

While not what he expected, President Rawlings accepted the ruling but added that “we cannot allow that arm of Government to stage a coup d’etat against the other organs.”²⁵² Clearly, Rawlings was learning that there were limits to the exercise of executive power in a democratic system. His acceptance of the institutions’ independence of thought and opinion further boosted confidence in Ghanaian institutions of democratic governance. In this sense, abeyance of the rule of law differed vastly from the pre-transition era of one-man rule during which the military regime ruled with an iron fist.

In addition, the new democratic climate created a conducive atmosphere for press freedom in Ghana. In 1993, for instance, parliament locked horns with the *Daily Graphic* over a difference in opinion on a bill addressing child abuse. The national daily did not back down. In fact, the paper retorted that “it takes more than parliament to make laws” and that it was the responsibility of the press to let the house know its flaws because “if the drums are not after you, you say the beats are good.”²⁵³ The challenge to state power sent signals to opposition groups that there was change in the dynamics of the nation’s politics. The new media environment helped opposition groups position themselves to contribute to strengthening the rule of law. The work of the media and non-governmental groups show that even, without U.S. backing for democratization process in Ghana in the early 1990s, Ghanaian agency advocated, won, and consolidated the rule of law in ways that no external support could do. Ghanaian resourcefulness in the democratization process buttresses Griffins’ and Enos’s conclusion that foreign donor assistance does not

²⁵¹ GNA, “President Rawlings Addresses Parliament,” *Daily Graphic*, January 8, 1994.

²⁵² GNA, “President Rawlings Addresses Parliament.”

²⁵³ Yaw Boadu Ayebofoh, “Power and Glory,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, July 16, 1993.

necessarily foster democratization.²⁵⁴ Rather, as Mbaku and Ihonvbere noted, democratization emerges from intense local aspirations and a commitment to attain those goals.²⁵⁵

4.2. Democracy as Transactional: The Mass Expectation for Socio-Economic Change

The resentment and political rivalry that plagued national level partisan politics was not felt as intensely at the local level. Instead, post-election Ghanaian society saw increasing cooperation and collaboration among constituents to press ahead with development needs. In the town of Obuasi, an interparty group was formed by local political parties to find ways of giving prominence to their needs on the national stage through their member of parliament (MP).²⁵⁶ Among concerns of the constituents were “the large army of unemployed youth roaming the streets of Obuasi; environmental pollution and the inadequacies of health, education, and housing facilities.”²⁵⁷ The interparty committee teamed up with the MP to find solutions to these problems while serving as a point of contact for people mobilization towards these efforts. For these citizens far from the centre of political decision making in Accra, the political reforms meant an opportunity to execute social, economic and political change in communities.

Among civil servants, the advent of a new democratic experiment meant empowerment against arbitrary government fiscal policies like increases in fuel prices that caused hardship for many people. They subsequently rejected the finance and energy

²⁵⁴ Keith B. Griffin and John L. Enos, “Foreign Assistance: Objectives and Consequences,” *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 18, no. 3 (1970): 313–27.

²⁵⁵ Mbaku and Ihonvbere, *Multiparty Democracy and Political Change: Constraints to Democratization in Africa*.

²⁵⁶ Boniface Ablekpe, “Obuasi Parties Pledge to Enhance Dev.,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, January 16, 1993.

²⁵⁷ Ablekpe, “Obuasi Parties Pledge to Enhance Dev.”

ministries' attempts at increasing the prices of fuel on the market in early 1993.²⁵⁸ The impact of the Structural Adjustment Programme in foisting unequal pay scales and unfavourable service conditions were already enough discomfort for many civil servants. These workers capitalized on the new freedoms and constitutional resources to oppose state policies hurtful to their economic wellbeing.

Post-election rhetoric also emphasized a need to work together towards the gains sought through democracy. Many Ghanaians hoped that the transition to democracy would translate into improved social and economic conditions and expanded opportunities for individual liberties. Like all other emergent democracies of the day, these goals were not new. But the way in which Ghanaians quickly adapted to the political shift and its meaning for their lives highlighted their awareness, maturity, and understanding of the complexities of democratic politics unlike places such as Nigeria, Gambia and Malawi where democracy suffered retrenchment.

Alhaji B.A Fuseini, deputy majority leader of parliament, reminded his NDC party that "winning the election was just the start of real hard work that demands honesty, patience and loyalty which are often destroyed by intra-party feuding."²⁵⁹ While palpably partisan, the statement underlines the shifting focus of the electorate after the elections in Ghana towards securing the public goods democracy had to offer for the vast majority of the populace. For instance, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) demanded parliament to reconvene immediately to discuss the 1993 budget due to the "growing public outcry."²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ Graphic Reporter, "Civil Servants Reject Kwesi Botchwey's Claim," *The People's Daily Graphic*, January 16, 1993.

²⁵⁹ Anthony Tawiah, "Parliament Will Never Be a Rubber Stamp," *The People's Daily Graphic*, January 22, 1993.

²⁶⁰ Akwasi Ampratwum-Mensah, "Parliament Must Reconvene Now to Discuss Budget," *The People's Daily Graphic*, January 22, 1993.

The union expected that due to these concerns, the new speaker of parliament would have recalled the house to deliberate the issues citizens or the TUC had raised.²⁶¹ They were implicitly demanding that democracy must have meaning for the bulk of the citizenry. This Ghanaian understanding of democracy as transactional show they were mature and informed about the power of democracy to change the conditions of their communities. Such a grasp of the meaning of democracy challenged the American view of developing states like Ghana as fertile places for the transplant of U.S. institutions and democratic culture. Developing countries like Ghana showed that they were well informed about democracy and its implications for their development and future.

In rural communities mostly unaffected by the complexity of national politics, farmers like Kofi Anto expected the new political shift to give them respite from unexplained economic decisions like price changes on the fuel market. When a journalist asked what he wished from government, Anto explained that “as a first step, they should reduce the price of kerosene. The whole district does not have electricity. As a matter of fact, every household in the district depends on kerosene and to increase the price means forcing us in the rural communities to over-contribute our quota to national development.”²⁶² Evans Ababio, a trader, concurred, “we depend solely on kerosene, and if government wants funds for balancing budget and initiating development projects, it should not take most of it from us.”²⁶³ These rural farmers had no access to electricity or solar technology so increasing prices of kerosene, the only available fuel for lighting in rural communities, had dire repercussions on the economic balance of these areas.

²⁶¹ Ampratwum-Mensah, “Parliament Must Reconvene Now to Discuss Budget.”

²⁶² Fiifi Mensah, “The People’s Feelings,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, February 23, 1993.

²⁶³ Mensah, “The People’s Feelings.”

Similarly, in the northern parts of the country, farmers appealed to government to review the prices of fertilizer to boost their agricultural output following changes in the commodity price of fertilizer in early 1993.²⁶⁴ They even requested the administration to consider the “reintroduction of subsidy on fertilizer to alleviate the effects of trade liberation especially on the privatization of the marketing of fertilizer on farming.”²⁶⁵ The electorate therefore expected political change to translate into meaningful transformation for the economic livelihood of their communities. Such an understanding of democracy as transactional defied the perception of developing countries as almost always politically underdeveloped in the minds of policy makers in places like Washington. For Ghanaian voters, the difference between a military regime and a democratic administration lay in the presence of opportunity in the latter to advocate, through threat of electoral rejection, for infrastructure, economic improvement and social change.

Moral institutions in Ghana also contributed to the changing political narrative after the elections. The clergy called for cooperation and togetherness among political parties in order to exploit the benefits of democracy. Rt. Rev. Francis W.B Thompson, Anglican Bishop of Accra, urged opposition parties and the ruling party to cooperate for the greater good of the country.²⁶⁶ Nana Anarfi Kokortoh, paramount chief of Hwidiem in the Ashanti Region, encouraged his people to tolerate each other’s political views “without any rancor or bitterness.”²⁶⁷ Believing that tolerance promised a better future, the chief asked them to eschew “misinformation and disinformation so as to allow a peaceful atmosphere to prevail” for the progress of the community and the nation as a

²⁶⁴ GNA, “Review Fertilizer Price-Farmers,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, March 3, 1993.

²⁶⁵ GNA, “Review Fertilizer Price-Farmers.”

²⁶⁶ GNA, “Leaders of Parties Urged to Cooperate,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, February 1, 1993.

²⁶⁷ Graphic Reporter, “Tolerate Others’ Views,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, January 9, 1993.

whole.²⁶⁸ The encouragement from these leaders was thus a double call for national unity and effective utilization of democracy for material improvement. Citizens and communities understood the opportunities and advantages democratic transition held for them; they intended to fully realize the potential embedded in that transition for qualitative improvement in their livelihoods.

The transition further strengthened political activism among the leading parties and other actors while empowering many neutral or apolitical individuals to amplify their voices in national dialogues over politics, economics and social issues salient to the nation's wellbeing. Commentators such as Kofi Frimpong, Daniel Buor and Yaw Boadua-Ayebofoh wrote pieces in the dailies that expanded the scope of democratic debate or simply educated others on the constitutional resources available for protecting individual freedom.²⁶⁹ This enhanced individual liberties and the rule of law because citizens grew in confidence in their ability to challenge the state legitimately with full cover provided by the constitution. For example, where demonstrations in the 1980s were explained as advocating a return to democracy and in defiance of unlawful authority, the protests of the post-transition period were couched as lawful exercises of citizens' rights under the 1992 constitution. It did not require the U.S. or other developed democracies to pump in capital to educate Ghanaians on their rights or teach political parties how to effectively present a solidified opposition to government's policy excesses.²⁷⁰ Ghanaian citizens

²⁶⁸ Graphic Reporter, "Tolerate Others' Views".

²⁶⁹ Kofi Frimpong, "Reflections on the Constitution," *Daily Graphic*, January 25, 1994; Buor, "A Healthy Opposition and Human Rights"; Ayebofoh, "Democracy Will Triumph."

²⁷⁰ The National Republican Institute made it an important part of its democracy promotion efforts to train parties in Third World states to oppose left-leaning dictatorships. Their Democratic colleagues also provided similar help to leftist political bodies in developing states against right-wing dictators. In the case of Ghana, the ground was already too mature for such kinds of support. Political parties were staunchly anti-government and knew how to exploit the constitutional resources at their disposal to defend

naturally took up the responsibility of advocating in favour of the free press, the right of assembly, and for a voice in what happened in the country. Contrary to Michael Clough's conclusion that U.S. engagement offered a way to foster democracy in Africa, Ghanaians ardently fought for democratic values in the early post-transition years without much external assistance.²⁷¹

As early as February 1993, the main opposition NPP launched an effort to better their visibility through effective discussion of national policy issues and continued political campaigns which were sold as a national tour.²⁷² They set out to explain to the electorate their decision to pull out of the parliamentary elections and the rejection of the presidential election outcome. This helped boost the party's popularity and showed that it was ready to serve a credible opposition role in the new republic. In honour of its pledge to keep the democracy vibrant through responsible opposition action, the NPP applied and got a permit to hold a rally in the Eastern Region as part of the national tour. However, the Ghana Police Service withdrew the permit citing earlier acts of violence by unknown men at an earlier party gathering as excuse for the rejection. While abiding by this rejection, the party, through Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo, made known its "intention to jealously guide our existence."²⁷³ "We will resist any improper, unlawful

themselves from government overreach. A number of factors may account for this. Firstly, the enduring quality of the Ghanaian educational system produced informed, passionate citizens dedicated to working for far-reaching political change and willing to pay with their time, capital, and knowledge to secure that society. Secondly, the long history of political and voting rights that had been enjoyed since the 1850s, albeit in limited spaces early on, created a politically fertile, conscious public mindset that proved resistant to the persistence of unlawful military rule. For a full report on NRI activities see Shipler, "Missionaries of Democracy: U.S. Aid for Global Pluralism," 1986.

²⁷¹ Clough, *Free at Last?: US Policy toward Africa and the End of the Cold War*.

²⁷² GNA, "NPP to Start National Campaign," *The People's Daily Graphic*, February 4, 1993.

²⁷³ GNA, "NPP Condemns Acts of Intimidation," *The People's Daily Graphic*, March 3, 1993.

attempt to curtail the life of the party,” the statement continued.²⁷⁴ The opposition NPP thus showed that it would reap the fruits of democratic change in organizing and expressing itself as it saw fit. Leaders of the party did not just caution government but also engaged the inspector of police and other heads of enforcement institutions to ensure that future denials of basic political rights did not occur.

In practicing patience and faith in the developing institutions, Ghanaian politicians and interest groups contributed to advancing the frontiers of democratic governance. They did not advocate specific external political ideologies, foreign understandings of liberty, or other beliefs extraneous to the Ghanaian political and social context. Already entrenched indigenous democratization activities in Ghana determined political and social convictions that drove reforms in Ghana rather than external influences. Thus, while the promotion of liberty and democracy, as Michael Hunt claims, defined U.S. foreign policy, Ghana’s experience defies the notion that such exports were necessary for successful democratic state building in developing countries.²⁷⁵

Though the NPP was visible in the early struggles of opposition politics, it was by no means a lone voice in the political wilderness advocating for good governance. Other parties such as the PHP, PNC, NIP and the Democratic People’s Party (DPP) were all ardent, visible forces in opposing government excesses and in demanding greater accountability from public officers for the exercise of political power.²⁷⁶ At a press conference convened by an interparty group of NPP, PNC, NIP and PHP in January 15, 1993, the parties expressed their dissatisfaction with the electoral process.²⁷⁷ Leaders of

²⁷⁴ GNA, “NPP Condemns Acts of Intimidation.”

²⁷⁵ Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy*.

²⁷⁶ The Democratic People’s Party (DPP) was founded by a known private lawyer, Mr. Ward Brew.

²⁷⁷ Graphic Reporter, “Parties Pledge to Promote Democracy.”

these parties included Dr. Hilla Limann, Prof. Adu Boahen, and Prof. Naa Afarley Sackeyfio. They were the crème de la crème of Ghana's intelligentsia and provided deserving opposition to government.

Similarly, a group of six parties in opposition demonstrated on February 16, 1993 to register their opposition to the election results and the transition process. A number of the group's members were arrested and detained by the police service for breaching the rules of public order.²⁷⁸ On February 19, 1993, the spokesman for the Joint Action Committee, Kweku Baako Junior, gave the government an ultimatum for the release of their members or the whole group would present themselves for arrest and prosecution. Arguing the Committee's case, Baako Junior pointed out, "Our position is premised on the fact that the Fourth Republican Constitution...guarantees the right of all citizens to organize and participate in demonstrations against policies and actions of government."²⁷⁹ The Committee was determined to not only appropriate all their constitutional rights but use them to further the cause of accountability and political transparency in the new democracy. The convictions expressed in such utterances came from the contexts of the Ghanaian political environment in the immediate post-transition era when citizens began testing the reach and limits of the constitution.

Such ultimatums served to remind the ruling party of the limits of political power as well as the real political checks and balances opposition parties posed to the wrongful use of public resources. The political vigilance of the opposition and interest groups sometimes reached points of extremes. For instance, when political propagandists started spreading unfounded allegations that the government planned to assassinate opposition

²⁷⁸ GNA, "Opposition Condemns Arrest of Supporters," *Ghanaian Times*, February 20, 1993.

²⁷⁹ GNA, "Opposition Condemns Arrest of Supporters."

elements and financiers, the NPP seized the opportunity to require the president to “reassure the nation that the use of political violence to intimidate and eliminate political opponents will not be tolerated under constitutional rule.”²⁸⁰ J. Agyenim-Boateng’s call on Rawlings to speak about those rumors furthered a narrative pursued by the NPP that it was the victim of intimidation, molestation, and bullying at the hands of ruling party officials.²⁸¹

Post-election activism therefore helped the new Ghanaian democracy accommodate divergent opinions. Ghanaian consolidation of democracy in the early Fourth Republic proved that aid donors’ support cannot replace genuine internal political ardor in strengthening the foundations of the rule of law. Unlike the case in Zambia, Ghanaian prodemocracy forces dug deep into their own resources to oppose state overreach.²⁸² Those sacrifices solidified the Fourth Republican democracy in Ghana.

Post-election politics saw citizens engaged in ongoing conversations about democratic statehood and the limits of power. The public waded into the debate regarding the expanse and limits of state power over such issues as political gatherings and under what circumstances the police could deny or reject requests for permits for meetings by political parties. Some contributors to national debates like Kofi Akordor were of the view that “if a group of people want to demonstrate against a government policy or the other way round, it is not the business of any one to prevent the exercising of this democratic right.”²⁸³ Akordor and likeminded Ghanaians wanted to see a change in the political atmosphere in a way that differed from the military era when greater restrictions

²⁸⁰ Graphic Reporter, “NPP Appeals to President Rawlings,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, March 26, 1993.

²⁸¹ J. Agyenim-Boateng was the national secretary of the NPP.

²⁸² Rakner, “Institutionalizing the Pro-Democracy Movements: The Case of Zambia’s Movement for Multiparty Democracy.”

²⁸³ Kofi Akordor, “Building a Bridge of National Unity,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, February 23, 1993.

were placed on those rights. The freedom of expression so dominated public discussions that panelists at the annual New Year School in 1993 devoted substantial time to discussing the matter. They made passionate appeals to the new democratic administration and the populace at large to have the utmost “sympathy and moral support for journalists to enable the mass media function effectively in the Fourth Republic.”²⁸⁴ Press freedom benefitted not only political parties but society generally by enlarging government accountability and transparency.

Subsequently, the government, heeding to these demands for accountability and transparency, appointed an Ombudsman on January 7, 1993 to further facilitate institutional consolidation in the fight against political excesses or the abuse of power. That move owed as much to the people’s efforts after the transition as it did to the executive’s initiative. The executive’s action was an early sign that the transformed ruling group were willing to listen to those directly affected by political decision-making in the country. They were committed to assure citizens and observers that democracy had come to stay.²⁸⁵ As Kenneth Jost notes, these assurances, in addition to institutional readiness and opposition tenacity, did more to enlarge democracy than foreign assistance programs.²⁸⁶ Larry Diamond points out that nothing consolidates a democracy better than an indigenous civil society and mass participation in the political space.²⁸⁷ The boldness

²⁸⁴ E.G.K. Deletsa, “Public Asked to Give Journalist More Support to Perform under Fourth Republic,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, January 5, 1993.

²⁸⁵ Kobby Asmah, “Parliament Will Live up to Expectation-Annan,” *The People’s Daily Graphic*, February 4, 1993. Mr. Justice Daniel F. Annan, the new speaker of parliament, gave this assurance during a courtesy call on him by Canadian observers of the Ghanaian elections of 1992. As a key brain in the transition, his views certainly carried weight in government. Annan’s words here were largely the government’s assessment of the situation as well as how willing it was to go in sustaining and effectively nursing the democratic exercise into maturity.

²⁸⁶ Jost, “Is Democracy Taking Root in Sub-Saharan Africa?”

²⁸⁷ Larry Jay Diamond, “Toward Democratic Consolidation,” *Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 3 (1994): 4–17.

of Ghanaian political coalitions, state institutions acting truly independently, and rural citizens stimulated the political climate in ways that extended democratic culture and the rule of law in the early Fourth Republic. Those gains, Ghanaian-led as they were, challenge American views of their own efforts at democracy advancement in developing countries in Africa.

Commenting on the Fourth Republic, Alex Hamah, an opinion writer in the *Peoples' Daily Graphic*, appealed to his fellow countrymen to look within for answers to democratization and economic development.²⁸⁸ Commentators like Hamah believed that early attempts at democracy should be accompanied by a search for local solutions to local problems in order to assure a balanced development of the political systems of the continent. Hamah continued that: “apart from the necessity for establishing durable democratic institutions to uphold, nurture and sustain the entire democratic edifice, Africa’s political leaders and universities should find quick and lasting solutions to the problem of the misdirection of Africa’s economy due to over-reliance on foreign advisors and experts.”²⁸⁹ He continued that while UN prodemocracy initiatives in 1990s were laudable and commendable, African people themselves had to find local solutions to local problems. He thus advocated a predominantly indigenous approach to democratization without dismissing the necessity of external support in some areas. This indigenous approach to democracy did not endorse opposition belligerence as signs of political tolerance or maturity.

Patricia Kubow argues that indigenous involvement in the construction of the meaning of democracy gave local people agency in ways that the undercut American

²⁸⁸ Alex Hamah, “Democratic Africa...Some Challenges,” *The People's Daily Graphic*, January 8, 1993.

²⁸⁹ Hamah, “Democratic Africa...Some Challenges.”

promotion of the North American type of democracy in developing states.²⁹⁰ That is why Ghanaian interest groups wanted to spread awareness of politics and citizens' rights so that Ghanaians of all walks of life could partake meaningfully in state-building. For instance, women's groups, recognizing the role of education in the rule of law, requested that many copies of the constitution be printed for distribution as part of mass education on constitutional government.²⁹¹ Access to the constitution would, in the opinion of Beatrice Love Ashong, a women's leader in the Greater Accra Region, help people "read and understand their rights and responsibilities."²⁹² That knowledge, she hoped, would lead them to assume ownership of the constitutional document. Prof. Adu Boahen added his voice to the call for the translations to be into Ghanaian languages to enable people to read, know their rights and understand their obligations to the state.²⁹³ Within the nation's democratizing context, people identified and advocated the areas of need in an effort to strengthen the foundations of the rule of law. Ghanaian people were thus, well informed of the challenges and opportunities of constitutionalism in their country.

As demonstrated in this chapter, the post-election atmosphere in Ghana was a mixed bag of interests and activities aimed at consolidating the foundations of democracy. The discourses and activism drew in all sectors of Ghanaian society including politicians, journalists, clergymen, chiefs and students. The national character of these dialogues and happenings highlight the pervasive nature of democratic culture in the early period.

²⁹⁰ Patricia K. Kubow, "Teachers' Constructions of Democracy: Intersections of Western and Indigenous Knowledge in South Africa and Kenya," *Comparative Education Review* 51, no. 3 (August 1, 2007): 307–28, <https://doi.org/10.1086/518479>.

²⁹¹ GNA, "Print More Constitution Booklets," *The People's Daily Graphic*, January 11, 1993.

²⁹² GNA, "Print More Constitution Booklets."

²⁹³ Kwame Asare Boadu, "Don't Drag Police into Conflict with Opposition," *The People's Daily Graphic*, February 22, 1993.

Though plagued by coups, the Ghanaian people never lost a sense of political awareness and the motivation necessary to lead their own political reforms. The political engagements of the post transition days helped cast off the political reticence of the military years and opened the floodgate to expanded partisan and non-partisan advocacy that deepened the democracy of the country. These Ghanaian democracy efforts, which included apolitical groups, private citizens, moral society leaders, and the press consolidated the broad, mass-based nature of democratization, reinforcing the conclusion that Ghanaian democracy gained more from local people than from U.S. external involvement.

CONCLUSION

This thesis explores how democracy headlined U.S. post-Cold War foreign policy as well as the politics of assistance in furthering the promotion of democracy. It also examines the extent to which American democracy promotion played out in U.S.-Ghana relations in the 1990s. Focusing on how Ghanaian social and political forces molded debates over the country's transition and consolidation of the rule of law, the thesis challenges the assumption that U.S. democracy promotion efforts were responsible for the political changes taking place in that country. Instead, I have contended that democratization was made possible through Ghanaian agency and commitment to realizing the rule of law in ways that befitted the political culture and context of Ghana.

The discourse over democracy and its place in American history pervaded much of U.S. society in the 20th Century. The manifestation of that deep-seated confidence in an enduring legacy of rule of law and freedom was visible in the U.S. elite's and public's expressions about the civility, maturity, and universal desirability of American democracy. Such discourses were crystalized as national symbols that defined national choices on the world stage and it was through these symbols that citizens made meaning of their state and their relationship with other polities. American perceptiveness of their state as historically democratic, free and prosperous shaped their foreign policy formulations. However, the practical implementation of those policies in Africa was fraught with ambiguities, as shown in this project.

The American Cold War tendency to prioritize economic and strategic relations over political ones in external affairs was still noticeable in the post-Cold War era. This made democracy promotion sometimes seem like rhetoric employed when moralizing

about bad governance in some African countries. Much of American post-Soviet foreign policy still placed security and economic concerns above democracy promotion, even if unconsciously. While Washington tried to present an image as a champion of democracy, its choices and actions when democracy was at stake did not always substantiate its prodemocracy rhetoric.

Eventually, democracy promotion was repositioned in a way that subjugated it to the security and economic choices of the U.S. government while allowing it to remain dominant in public discourse on American foreign policy. During the Cold War, democracy linked American security and economic commitments to countries such as Japan and South Korea. In the post-Cold War era, the United States' decision to broaden ties with other states always depended on the economic and security advantages that those state presented to American interests. Democratization, therefore, became a means to the security and commercial ends sought by the United States. This way, Washington's Cold War and post-Cold War foreign policy goals and actions were synchronous.

In the 1990s, Washington's decision makers' external policy choices sought to supposedly tie adoption of American style free institutions to economic assistance programmes to help spread U.S. national political ideas to developing states. These foreign policy goals were therefore grounded in domestic American ideology, norms, and values. However, as has been demonstrated, construing democracy in those domestic terms for export was not actualized in countries like Ghana where the peoples' own interpretation of the concept of democracy held sway. Target countries like Ghana had local peculiarities and contexts that defied the transplanting of U.S. style democracy hook, line, and sinker. The constitutional modifications Ghana made in its Fourth

Republican Constitution signaled that universal concepts of democracy were adapted to suit the Ghanaian context towards serving the political and administrative needs of the country.

The Ghanaian democratizing context, led by the Ghanaian people, undermined the U.S. conviction that it was exporting democracy to African states. Such an American perception robs countries like Ghana of their political agency in choosing and designing the political system they prefer to live in. Ghanaians' instrumentality in domestic democracy promotion surpassed external aid from the U.S. in the process of transitioning and consolidating the rule of law in the country. Ghanaian commitment, even under military rule, to stand up for democratic reforms shows that foreign aid would not succeed in building democracies and sustaining the rule of law unless local people show leadership, interest, and dedication to the principles of political change and democratic accountability.

Using the case study of Ghana, the historical evidence indicates that democracy was not imported, imposed or copied from the United States. The Ghanaian people understood democratic tenets and led the way in creating and implementing a contextually appropriate democratic system that aligned with their national values. Though U.S. assistance supported democracy, it did not affect the democratization process in the ways portrayed or hoped for by Clinton, Nau, Bush, or Albright. Though Ghana gained some aid (both development aid and democracy aid) from Washington, it took genuine citizen interest and participation to bring about meaningful rule of law. Therefore, Ghanaian agency in advocating for democracy outweighed the U.S. role in the whole transition and democracy consolidation process. The country's political history

and experiences, the unfavourable economic conditions of the 1980s, and the long years of military rule, marked by long silences in representational decision-making, were all impetuses for the democratizing reforms in Ghana in the 1990s.

This study provides understanding of the democracy-aid nexus beyond the quantitative confines of earlier studies by combining archival and statistical sources to explain ways in which aid and democratization were used to complement each other in Washington's relations with the developing world.²⁹⁴ In that sense, it animates discussions of aid, democracy and U.S. foreign policy through combining traditional aggregate aid volumes, press freedom measures, election data, and trade figures with historical evidence from the archives in ways that deepen our knowledge of post-Cold War Ghana-U.S. aid relations as well as democratization.

As post-election politicking in Ghana showed, elections alone do little to specify the sophistication and extent of consolidation of democracy. Elections may mark an extrinsic, visual demonstration of political reform but consolidating the rule of law requires much more than that. Democratic consolidation demands mass participation and ongoing citizen activism to safeguard the vital fruits of a democratic spirit including tolerance of minority views, a free press, improved economic livelihood for citizens, and truly independent state institutions to safeguard citizen rights. The conspicuity of Ghanaian interest groups of all shades and walks of life in post-transition politics and governance fostered a sense of responsibility, assurance and involvement befitting a

²⁹⁴ Stephen Knack, "Does Foreign Aid Promote Democracy?," *International Studies Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (2004): 251–66; Deborah A Bräutigam and Stephen Knack, "Foreign Aid, Institutions, and Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 52, no. 2 (2004): 255–85; Dunning, "Conditioning the Effects of Aid"; David H Bearce and Daniel C Tirone, "Foreign Aid Effectiveness and the Strategic Goals of Donor Governments," *The Journal of Politics* 72, no. 3 (2010): 837–51; De Mesquita and Smith, "Foreign Aid and Policy Concessions."

democracy. Citizens' vigilance over democratic values and constitutional norms from infringement by power holders firmed democratic practice, guaranteed a measure of independence for state institutions such as the judiciary and media, and expanded the opportunity for people to access the political space.

The meanings derived from the sources used for this study go a long way to deepen our grasp of post-Cold War U.S. foreign aid policy, democracy promotion and the role of national ideology in informing American external projections of power. Also, based on these sources, we see that though U.S. foreign policy aims in the post-Cold War years were multifaceted, security and economic priorities continued to dictate Washington's aid politics towards developing states for both development and democracy programmes. Lastly, the sources point us to Ghanaian political enterprise in negotiating both foreign aid and external attempts at influencing the nature and pace of political reforms in the 1990s. Though Ghanaian benefitted from some American support and Western democratic institutional building, the Ghanaian people took leadership of the entire transition process and built the new democracy on the unique historical and political experience, context and expectations of their country.

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